175 162 264 567 been given through its use to substantiate the many charges of cannibalism in Haiti that have been made. Yet those who, desirous of establishing such cannibalism, quote this passage from St. Mery do not always remember to quote it in its complete context:

> "Some of these butchers of human flesh are also brought to Santo Domingo . . . where, as in Africa, they are the horror of the other Negroes, notably of the Congos, who, because of their nearness to them [in Africa], are most exposed to their cruelties."[4]

174 162 567 These are thus the tribes who were presumably the most important in the Negro ancestry of the Haitians of today. Was there any least common denominator in language which made it possible for slaves fresh from Africa to communicate with one another after their arrival in Haiti? Was there sufficient similarity in their cultures so that this might form the basis for a retention of African beliefs and behavior despite the vicissitudes of slavery? And what were the characteristics of the African civilizations of these people?

● 171 174 199 177 567 The picture of West African life, as it is commonly drawn, emphasizes the great number of small tribal groups following dissimilar modes of life, speaking mutually unintelligible languages, and worshipping different gods. In a very general sense this is not untrue. On the face of it, the number of languages that are spoken in the area from which the slaves were derived would seem to have constituted an effective barrier not alone to any concerted action on the part of slaves, but even to communication between them, especially since in many regions of the New World it was a fixed policy to separate slaves from the same tribe.

Yet behind this semblance of sharp dissimilarities lies a basic unity of language and culture in all of West Africa, so that though languages were and are mutually unintelligible, structurally and idiomatically they are much the same. This

is why Créole, not alone in Haiti, but also in Martinique, in 171
Trinidad, and in Louisiana, like Negro English in other portions 174
of the New World, shows such consistency in structure 197
and idiom. The slaves, having mastered a requisite number 567
of words in the language of their masters, merely poured them into this mold of their own linguistic patterns and, approximating the phonetic values of such words in terms of the West African modes of speech, thus established a means of communication between one another, no matter what their tribal derivation.*

The region of West Africa which furnished the slaves was 171
an area of great and settled political entities. Here were to be 567
found the Fula and Mandingo empires in the western portion of the area, and the Hausa kingdom in northern Nigeria; the Ashanti and Fanti states in the Gold Coast, and, to the east, the kingdoms of Dahomey, of Yoruba, and of Benin; southward, those of Kongo and Loango. In all this vast territory law and order reigned, and regimentation of behavior under the direction of kings and priests was the rule. With this went a discipline that so deeply stamps African tradition that even the many years of European dominance have not been able to efface it.

The social life in this area, as well as its political organization, is to a very considerable extent a unit. Polygyny, the institution whereby a man may have more than one wife, is found in the entire region. Everywhere descent is counted on one side of the family, either the male or the female, and the larger significant relationship groupings that are composed of those who regard themselves as descended from a single and often mythical totemic ancestor are equally characteristic. Discipline rules within the family as well as outside it and is exacted from the earliest days in the life of a child. Needless to say, it is a far cry from this ordered state of society to the disorganized life which the stereotype of the "savage African" envisages.

● 171 771 567 Despite the influence of Mohammedanism in the north, there are certain similarities in religion to be found everywhere. Even among the Mohammedans, magic is as potent as it ever was, and as St. Mery correctly observed for his time regarding the Mohammedan slaves, the aboriginal gods have by no means been forgotten. On the west coast and in the Congo, however, pagan religions having a degree of complexity which accords with the complexity of the other aspects of these civilizations are found everywhere. Magic constitutes only one aspect of these systems in which pantheons of deities, each pantheon and each member of each pantheon with its special function, are held to control the destinies of the world and of man. The ancestral cult is another important aspect of West African belief, with the spirits of the dead envisaged as living on in another world, yet alert to manifest power for good or evil among their descendants. Not only in cosmology, but in ceremonialism as well are there patterns that characterize all West Africa. The worship of the gods through the dance, and the phenomenon of possession of devotees by their deities; the place of song in worship, and the special character of this music; the use of drums and other percussion instruments such as the rattle and iron gong in religious rites; these again are elements which all slaves in Haiti, no matter what their tribal affiliations, had in common.

171 174 Nevertheless, as one studies Haitian folk-custom and folk-belief today, recognizable survivals of traits from the cultures of all the tribes that have been named are not to be found in [567] anything approaching a comparable degree. Little of Senegalese practice is to be seen at present, while similarly, at least in the valley of Mirebalais, far less Congo derivatives can be discerned than would be expected when the vast number of Congo slaves imported into Haiti are recalled. Practically no traces of Gold Coast or Ivory Coast custom and belief are discoverable; the word "Ibo" appears from time to time, and several Ibo gods are worshipped; Nago deities, as will be seen,

191 179 [192]

manifest themselves in large number. The majority of Afri*can traits, however, derive from the geographical center of* the slaving area, especially from the region of Dahomey. Even the famous word "voodoo" is Dahomean, as all Haitian writers and some Europeans and Americans have recognized. Whatever its meaning in Haiti at the present time, its derivation is clear. It is the *vodun* of the Fõn-speaking people,—a word which is best translated as "god." Names of gods, and social and economic institutions, point their origin to this same Dahomean source. This being the case, it may be well to give a general description of the civilization of these Dahomeans, as an aid in the interpretation of the various phases of Haitian peasant life which are to be considered in the ensuing pages.*

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In their basic attitude toward life the people of Dahomey have achieved a blend between co-operation and competition. Living in a society which, from before the time of contact with the Europeans, had a pecuniary base, with its resulting competitive drives, the desire to gain wealth both as an end in itself and for the prestige to be derived from its display is outstanding in native psychology. At the same time, and most particularly in the field of production, co-operative endeavor is to be found throughout the kingdom. As with all West African folk, agriculture is the most important element in Dahomean economy. Other forms of production are iron-working, brass-casting, weaving of cotton and raffia cloth, the making of appliquéd designs on ceremonial cloths, and the manufacture of pottery.

A large part of the heavy labor in Dahomey is done by means of the co-operative groups known by the term *dokpwe*. These associations not only clear the fields, but do the strenuous work of erecting walls for houses and compound enclosures and of thatching. When work is to be done, the one who is in need of the services of a *dokpwe* goes to the chief and arranges for the men to work for him on a given day. If he

000 to speak the special "languages" of their particular cults.
[184] One aspect of this initiation,[a] which has been carried over
[789] almost unchanged into some parts of Haiti (though not into
[794] Mirebalais) is the ordeal by fire, in which the novitiate must plunge his hand into a pot of boiling cornmeal and rest his foot on the red-hot stones which support the pot.

The role of the family deities has already been given; of the third category, that of the personal forces, one finds first of all the soul, of which each individual is conceived as having three. More important is the cult of Fa, or Destiny, which came to Dahomey from the Yoruba, and is a part of a widely spread system of discovering the destiny of a man that characterizes not only West Africa and the remainder of the continent, but most of the Old World. In Dahomey today this end is carried out by assessing the significance of the various permutations and combinations of sixteen palm kernels "thrown" by the diviner. In addition there exist traditionally earlier and less "official" methods of divining, which in the main are those which have survived in the New World.
[776] Intimately associated with both the soul and the destiny of
[171] man is the deity who is at once a member of the great pantheons and one of the most personal of all the gods, Legba, whose African importance is attested by the extent to which he is today worshipped in many parts of the New World, and by his universality in Haiti. From the point of view of Dahomean philosophy Legba may be regarded as the god of accident, who gives to man a "way out" in a world ruled by an otherwise inexorable fate. Gross in his appetites and capricious, he is, nevertheless, beloved by the Dahomeans, and though his name is usually erroneously translated by the European term "devil," no appellation could be farther from reality. Of particular significance for his role in Haitan life as guardian of the crossroads and of the *barrière* is his place in Dahomean theology, since it is said: "Before the gods can

[a] [i.e., the initiation of devotees by priests into the religious cults of Dahomey—Analyst]

eat, Legba must be fed" — in other words, Legba is interlocutor between man and gods. 000

Another figure in this category of personal deities is Dã. Briefly, it would seem that Dã is an abstraction, used to designate anything sinuous, which moves silently, undulates, and cannot be controlled. It is the principle of movement, of energy, of life itself, and, by extension, of fortune. Often spoken of as a serpent, Dã is nevertheless but the principle of mobility. If not cared for, it will weaken, be preyed upon by others of its kind, and a man's fortune will disappear. Why, then, has this Dahomean serpent cult in its Haitian form been given so important a place in the writings on Haitian religion? In the first place, the principle represented by Dã is symbolized by serpents. Again, a myth describes the rainbow serpent to be one of a pair of great snakes, the other of which lies coiled beneath the earth to support its weight, that it may not fall into the sea. But most important of all is the regard for the snake in Whydah, where it is believed to be the mythical animal ancestor of the large relationship group whose center is that coastal city. The rainbow serpent is Dã Aido Wedo, [776] sometimes known as Damballa Wedo, whose importance as a Haitian deity is mentioned in all works which treat of Haitian religion, while Dangbe, so often found in the literature on Haiti, is, however, this Whydah totem which with time has also been adopted more widely. Thus much that has been [794] written of serpent-worship in this region of West Africa — [171] the place of origin of the patterns of most of the religious cults found in Haiti today — is the result of misconception resulting from a failure to analyze this belief to its ultimate significance.

It remains but to speak of magic. Magic in West Africa is not an isolated phenomenon, but is closely integrated with the other aspects of religion. In Dahomey magic charms are sold by professional workers of magic, but the derivation of the

121 174 562 162 cial classes to which they belonged, as well as the circumstances of their enslavement, their treatment in Africa before shipment to the New World and during the voyage, their initiation into their new mode of life, and the manner in which they lived as slaves, since all of these facts had considerable bearing on the processes which shaped the behavior of their descendants who now inhabit the island.

171 567 The integrated political organization of West Africa has been described, as well as the important fact that the class stratification in that region was almost as fixed and its social implications almost as far-reaching as in France. Even the early writers recognized that not all slaves came from the same ranks of society, just as they understood that there were various ways in which enslavement could be achieved. Père Labat, who lived in the West Indies for many years, listed four classes from which slaves were drawn. First, he says, were those whose punishments against native law had been commuted to perpetual banishment — that is, to slavery " for the private profit of the kings "; second were the prisoners of war; third were those who, already the slaves of native princes or of those persons to whom they had been given by these princes, were sold to meet the need of their masters for money; while fourth, comprising the greatest proportion of the slaves, were those snatched from their homes by the marauding bands of robbers who, with the connivance of native rulers, carried on these raids to satisfy the demands of the European dealers.[15] This classification and others of the period, though generally accepted and repeated by later writers, tells little concerning the ranks of society from which the slaves were drawn, except as this may be inferred. For this one must go to present-day West Africa, where a lively tradition of the slave-trade has survived and offers valuable supplementary information.[16]

000 In the light of the existing traditions in Dahomey and Nigeria, it is evident that from the point of view of the African, Labat's four classes must be compressed into two — the

[P. 138 is blank]

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT IS "VOODOO"?

MORE than any other single term, the word "voodoo" is 771
called to mind whenever mention is made of Haiti. Conceived as a grim system of African practices, it has come to be identified with fantastic and cruel rites and to serve as a symbol of daring excursions into the esoteric. Not only has emphasis been placed on its frenzied rites and the cannibalism supposed on occasion to accompany them, but its dark mysteries of magic and "zombis" have been so stressed that it has become customary to think of the Haitians as living in a universe of psychological terror.

What, then, is "voodoo"? "Voodoo," or *vodun*, as it will be termed here, following native pronunciation, is a complex of African belief and ritual governing in large measure the
religious life of the Haitian peasantry.[1] It also has an even 184
more restricted meaning in Mirebalais, where the word often 771
simply denotes a form of sacred dance accompanied by spirit- 535
possession or merely a dance which on occasion may take its 787
place along with the *calenda*, the *martinique*, the *zesse*, and other social dances at public celebrations, where an occurrence of possession would be rare and in questionable taste.
This latter meaning was recognized by St. Mery: 171 ●

> "The Calenda and the Chica are not the only dances 771
> in the colony which have come from Africa. There is an- 535

● 171 771 535 other one which has been known there for many years, principally in the west, which bears the name of *Vaudoux*. . . . But it is not only as a dance that the *Vaudoux* merits consideration, for it occurs under circumstances which assign to it a place among the institutions where superstition and bizarre practices play a considerable part." [2]

171 771 776 [192] In Dahomey, whence the term has come, *vodun*, as has already been stated, signifies "god" and is a general name for all deities. This source of the word has likewise long been known, as a reading of St. Mery shows:

> "According to the Arada Negroes, the real followers of *Vaudoux* in the colony . . . *Vaudoux* signifies an all-powerful and supernatural being on which depend all the events that come to pass on this globe." [3]

171 771 776 192 178 825 Similarly, de Vassière [4] quotes with approval a parallel definition from Peytraud, while modern Haitian writers also emphasize its Dahomean origin.[5] This meaning of the word had, however, undergone a change in its new home even during pre-Revolutionary times, for, according to St. Mery, the "all-powerful and supernatural being" had come to be a non-venomous serpent that stood as a symbol "for all those who 184 771 776 825 professed this same doctrine." Today in Mirebalais even this identification is a thing of the past, though the prominence given serpent-worship in Haiti by most writers [6] would make it reasonable to suppose that elsewhere in the island serpents are maintained by priests of the *vodun* cult and play an important role in the rites at which the gods are worshipped. Indeed, one priest from Arcahaie encountered in Mirebalais mentioned the fact that in his own temple he kept such a snake. Yet in our valley no worship of serpents as such was encountered, and there were even those who declared that they had no hesitation in killing any snake, though these brave assertions could not be tested. Serpent-worship in Mirebalais

serpent-worship in Mirebalais

may perhaps be said to have come to this: Adherents of the 184
African cults refrain from killing the snake, and should they 771
do so by accident, the African custom of giving ceremonial 776
burial to any creature having supernatural importance is fol- 825
lowed as an atonement. Where this is omitted, difficulties of 782
so serious a nature are felt to threaten that to prevent them a 766
priest of the cult is called upon to offer up a sacrifice and to beg forgiveness even after the little ceremony of burial has been performed.[7]

Inasmuch as *vodun* flourishes in Mirebalais despite the 771
minor role of serpent-worship, it is evident that in seeking to 171 ●
understand its nature and its philosophy other aspects must 177
be considered. Two historical facts must be kept constantly in mind in making this analysis, for without them, what follows would be meaningless. The first is that *vodun* derives from a background of African theology and ceremonialism. The second is that the Negroes have continuously been subjected to the influence of Catholicism during the centuries that have passed since their introduction into the island.

Yet another point may prove suggestive in providing a use- 184
ful point of view for an analysis of the *vodun* cult. This bears 771
upon a difficulty impossible and happily unnecessary to resolve in the field study of religion, which arises out of the degree of variation in answers to questions dealing with the same point. These answers differ not only according to the status of the individual in the cult, since layman and priest have understandably different concepts of the functions of deities based on unequal degrees of expert knowledge, but the extent to which an individual has religious interests or is indifferent to them influences the nature of his responses. A fundamental fallacy results from the fact that except where there is an officially sanctioned theology — which makes for dogma, and often for perfunctory worship, in contrast with the living dynamic nature of Haitian peasant belief and ritual — there are no " real " answers to questions in the field of religion. The

twins and the dead make a single chapter for us." This point 171
of view is supported by a study of the twin cult as found in that 174
part of West Africa from which so much of Haitian culture 776
came, where a single category of the supernatural world, com- 769
prising all ancestors, includes both twins and the dead, as 845
well as all others "who have passed through the womb of a woman." As might be expected, the concept is more elaborated in West Africa than in Haiti; but the important point is that in Haiti, though less explicitly formulated, it has persisted.

To worship twins it is not necessary either for a family to 845
number them among its members of this generation, or to 769
have included them within the memory of those living, for it is sufficient if a tradition exists that twins had once been born to some member of the family. If the twins are alive or lived in recent times, sacrifices are given both at Christmas and at harvest time; otherwise only at Christmas. Some families, indeed, worship twins because a *hungan* has divined that their unknown ancestors in "Guinée" had included them. There are still others who decide to worship the *marassa* without the advice of a diviner, because certain benefits are believed to come to those who worship twins, because of their power for good or evil.[1]

The source of this power is vague; one characteristic an- 845
swer to a question concerning it was: "Their power comes
from God. Do we ourselves know how twins are made?" It [776]
is agreed, however, that St. Nicholas is their spiritual father [773]
—an opinion based on the tale of this saint, held to have been a sorcerer who, in very early times, killed three *marassa* (the twins themselves and the *dosu,* or child after twins) and salted them away in a barrel. The mother of the children came to him to offer up her prayers, and, touched by her sorrow, he resuscitated them, since when he has been their "father." The power of twins, whatever its source, is very real to the Hai-
tians. They are believed to be able to predict rain, for ex- [787]

845
769
[533]
[539]

M'a pé mandé,	I ask,
Ça wé la si 'ou content?	Are you content with what you see there?

The food is eaten the same afternoon. If the twins are actually alive, everything they wear must be new and they must have identical clothes. At the sacrifice of the January harvest, native rice, cakes, okra, bananas, and one, two, or three chickens, designated by the twins themselves, are offered. The food is put in place, and as songs are sung it is left until the following day, when it is eaten. The worship of [184] twins differs markedly in various parts of Haiti. In Leogane, for example, some have such a ceremony only at harvest time, and have a greater *mangé marassa* every five years, when a goat and a chicken are killed and offered with the usual non-animal foods.

845 Twins stand in a peculiarly intimate relation to each other, ● [171] as might be expected from the traditional African belief that [184] twins share a single soul, which, as far as could be determined, only survives in attitude in Mirebalais. Should one die, the [769] living twin must put aside a bit of all food he eats, or a small part of any gift given him, for the other. If the twins are both girls, the attempt is usually made to have them betrothed and married at about the same time. If the female twin of a pair is married, she must give a present to her twin brother, and similarly her husband sees to it that his wife's male twin also receives a substantial gift from him as a peace offering, for it is dangerous to wait until the other decides on some overt mischief. The perplexing factor in dealing with twins is that they themselves often do not consciously will the trouble they bring. For example, should the twin of a married woman not feel friendly toward his sister's husband, though he might make a conscious effort to overcome this dislike, his spirit might proceed to use its full power to harass the man in such a way as to trouble the relationship of the couple.

The family then take the other con-
tainer to a crossroad, where it is deposited as an offering for 769
Legba, and its contents are eaten by the dogs, who significantly, [782]
in Dahomey are the animals sacred to this deity. Following
this, the adults enter the closed room, to feast at the
laden table.

Several days after the funeral two gourdes are paid a priest [793]
— "a real one," not a *prêt' savanne* — to chant a *libera* at the [465]
grave, a rite that must be repeated each year on All Saints'
Day. Each year, also, food is given the dead, though "not so
much as following a funeral." Chickens, beans, rice, and coffee
are the principal part of such an offering, for which no priest
need be called, as the ceremony is merely to let the dead know
that they are not forgotten. Every three or five years, however,
a large *mangé* must be given for all the family dead, and if held [535]
on the family habitation, there is social dancing, where such
favorites of the ancestors as the *martinique,* the *banda,* the
calebasse, and the *zesse* are danced.[8]

Differences in procedure mark various modes of death. 766
When a person is killed by lightning, a justice of the peace
must be called and the burial is performed at once. Such a
one has no "last prayer," because, death by lightning being
a punishment of God, it is felt that the dead probably made
an oath which he subsequently violated. Those killed by lightning [171] ●
or who die of smallpox are not mourned, but no explanation
could be obtained for this obvious survival of African
custom. If a leper has concealed his disease, mourning is
worn for him, though if the cause of death is generally known
this is forgone. There is customarily no mourning for suicides, [762]
and never where the regulations of the Church are rigorously
applied.

If the dead person was a *vodun* priest or otherwise had 764
strong *connaissance,* steps are taken before his death to "re- 766
move the *loa* from his head" so that his soul will not go under 776
the water, for, as has been explained, such souls are held to 775
be powerful spirits which may cause their family much harm

764
766 if, after a time, an expensive and troublesome ceremony is
776 not performed to bring them out and lodge them in a jar.
775 The *hungan* who performs the rite of removing these *loa* is
764 preferably himself a member of the family and is usually left
766 alone with one or two assistants and an elderly relative of the
776 dead, but if the family includes no *hungan*, the one who is
793 called, even though greatly trusted, is most carefully watched, because a strange priest might take for himself the valued gods of the dead, leaving only the weak ones. The *hungan* stands in place and calls the name of the dead. He puts some of the hair of the dead in the jar or in a calabash, with which the *loa* is supposed to go, and, unless another member of the family, nominated to receive the *connaissance* of the dead, is present, the jar or calabash is sealed until these spirits can be " given " to a successor.

766 No special purification is needed for a house where death
[764] has occurred except when the deceased was tubercular or a
[783] leper, when everything except his money is buried or thrown in some unfrequented place. The body of one who has died of smallpox, though washed, is buried as soon after death as possible without being enclosed in a coffin. Those who die of smallpox or leprosy, suicides, or persons shot as a punishment for crime are not buried in the communal cemetery, but in special sections of the graveyard, the lepers and victims of smallpox being separated from the others, for the Church declares these have died of the plague. One who drowns is buried at the riverside where his body is recovered, though if the corpse is not too badly decomposed, the authorities give permission, and the family of the dead can afford the expense of
[561] transportation, the body may be brought home. Children are
buried in the cemetery, but, on the principle that " the young
[171] must serve their elders," the funeral of a child is attended only by those relations who are younger than the dead; for in Haiti, as in Africa, it is not held seemly that the young should be followed to the grave by their elders. At the house, however,

slave, as a "sold *baka,*" remained to wreak vengeance upon 776 454
anyone who dared disturb his charge.

The reality of the *baka* to the Haitian was made dramati- 776
cally vivid by an incident involving an old blind and deaf 825
horse. It occurred one night on the principal streets of the
town of Mirebalais itself. The horse was first noticed as the
sun set, groping his way along, and finally circling the turn
of the road. Though people shouted at the animal, he would
not give way. As darkness came and doors and windows were
barred, the horse blundered into the small veranda of a house
inhabited by an elderly woman, her daughter, and her grand-
children. The younger woman cried out with fright when,
timidly peering about the side of the house, she saw their visi-
tor, but the older woman, whose age made her fearless in the
face of this supernatural danger, opened a window and vigor-
ously attacked the animal with a heavy stick, while he unhur-
riedly tried to get clear of the blows and finally moved on to
the next veranda, and so from house to house down the street.
On this night the habitual tranquillity did not settle over the
town, and all of the next day and many days thereafter there
was quiet talk of the danger that had been abroad, and much
speculation of its intended destination.

The *baka* are sometimes confused with the *démons,* as is 754
seen in the fragmentary information that was obtained about 776
the existence of secret societies, so feared by Mirebalais folk 575
because of their reputation for working all kinds of evil that
it was with difficulty that even the names of two of them could
be learned — the "Bissago," whose members appear at night
wearing horns and holding candles, and "Les Cochons sans
Poils." The former, termed *démons,* are believed to be able
to change into animals when they do their evil work, a feat
which would seem to make them *baka.* The societies all meet
in the open country at night, and each has a small drum. They [202]
are called together by the beating of one rock against another [171]
in a manner reminiscent of the Zangbeto society of Porto
Novo, Dahomey.

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CHAPTER XIII

AFRICA AND EUROPE IN HAITIAN LIFE

WITH the historical background of Haitian culture and its present-day organization in mind, we may now seek to disentangle the varied sources from which the institutions described in the preceding pages have been derived. The formalized expressions of religion will be treated in the chapter which follows; here the manner in which Europe and Africa have determined the forms of other phases of Haitian peasant life will be analyzed. 121

Even such a simple aspect of peasant life as the house, or *caille*, as it is termed, furnishes an illustration of this intermingling of cultures. In the countryside the typical dwelling is a rectangular structure of two rooms with a thatched gabled roof and walls of woven withes daubed with mud.[1] The rectangular floor plan and the roof are of West African type, but since both of these are also familiar in Europe, the house thus probably represents the coalescence of two dwelling forms which were originally not strikingly unlike each other. The type of thatching is purely African, as is the wall construction, for walls of twilled withes can be seen in West Africa today. On the other hand, what there is of furniture is entirely European. The African stool has given way to the 342 171 352 177

412 to cutting fruit, though seen in Africa, was probably introduced
177 there by the early traders, and all machetes found
[439] today in Haiti are imported from Europe or America. The
same is true of the hoe, for the short-handled, broad-bladed
West African hoe has given way to the European long-handled
type, though the blade of the Haitian hoe is somewhat broader
241 than that used in America and Europe. Despite the presence
177 of domesticated animals to draw the plow, this implement has
[407] never gained favor in Haiti, nor have recent efforts to teach
the Haitian peasant the use of the plow achieved any degree
of success. He prefers his African mode of cultivation, to say
which implies more than just the employment of a certain
implement, since even such matters as the manner in which
he employs his hands and feet in the process of planting
are included. When the Dahomean plants, for example, he
holds a calabash of seed under his left arm, from which he
takes the grains with his right hand. As he moves down the
rows of newly turned earth, he makes a depression with the
heel of his right foot, drops a few grains into this depression
and, replacing the earth with his toes, takes a step so that he
can repeat the process with his left foot. This is exactly the
manner in which Haitians were observed planting in the valley
[462] of Mirebalais.[8] Unlike the usage in Africa, however —
where the men clear the ground, the men and women plant,
[177] and the women tend the growing crops — the European pattern,
which places agriculture in all its essential phases in the
hands of men, has been taken over almost in its entirety.

252 The women have retained almost without change the African
178 modes of preparing food. Grain is first pounded in an
177 African-like mortar, with an aboriginal type of pestle, while
[412] the shelled kernels are winnowed in a large round basketry
tray. The cooking is either done on a raised mud platform
in the cooking shelter, as in West Africa, or on three stones,
employed as rests for the pots, a method equally characteristic
000 of Africa. In the Haitian cuisine the prevalence of stews, of

In the Haitian cuisine the prevalence of stews, of
dishes fried in deep fat, of the generous use of pepper in 252
seasoning, are all African, as are even the names of certain 262
dishes, such as *acansan,* a Nigerian-Dahomean term which des- [171]
ignates the cooked balls of cornmeal. One of the few Euro- [177]
pean intrusions is white bread, while the cassava cakes, also
important in native diet, derive from the aboriginal Indian
inhabitants.

In its outward forms the economic system under which the 436
Haitian peasant lives seems entirely based upon European 177
pecuniary patterns. Money follows the French system, even 433
to the official use of the French designation, *centimes,* for the smallest parts of the principal unit of currency, the *gourde.* Both paper money and coins are used, and as the result of the Marine occupation American money is as well known as the currency of the country itself. Buying and selling goes on in the accepted European manner, the price of such export crops as cotton, sugar-cane, and coffee responding to the fluctuations of the world market. In many of its inner aspects also, the values of the Haitian are influenced by the money economy taken over from Europe and America.

The conclusion that the economy of Africa has been swept aside by that of Europe needs, nevertheless, to be qualified if certain historical and psychological factors are not to be ignored. It must not be forgotten that in West Africa, long before the period of European contact, a monetary system based on the cowrie shell had been fully developed. The prestige of wealth, the resulting drive to obtain property, the pursuits of buying and selling, and other aspects of a pecuniary civilization were as current in West Africa at the time of slaving, and continue today, as in Europe or in Haiti. When some of the attitudes associated with the economic life are analyzed, it is no simple matter, therefore, to state whether they stem from African or European sources, or both.

One pattern common to both economies, the validation of 556
position through the conspicuous display of resources, has 177

556 [177] been largely lost in the peasant culture, possibly because of a prudence dictated by conditions of life wherein evidences of the possession of wealth — certainly in the case of a peasant — were an invitation to those who would despoil him. Only when a family of position gives a ceremony, or when one of its members is married or dies, is the lavishness of its preparations such as to suggest the importance of its place in the community. This does not hold for the individual. Personal 626 [177] ostentation is the more strongly inhibited by the belief that another's envy may bring ill fortune to the one against whom it is directed. In Mirebalais it has almost become a byword that the really substantial citizens look as though they were the poorest. This tradition in no way interferes with the preoccupation with adding to one's possessions, or with the desire to exert the power and enjoy the position that go with a command of large resources, or the will to pass on as large an inheritance as possible to children. In their origin, such drives [177] [178] can be ascribed neither to Europe nor to Africa, nor, for that matter, to the experiences of slavery, but rather to the interplay of two homologous patterns of culture that has produced the economic system and the economic motivations found in Haiti today.

423 [177] [178] In the matter of land tenure, and in attitudes toward private property, African tradition has disintegrated almost completely. Under the characteristic West African form of land tenure, land of a tribe is vested in the tribal head, who allots it to families for use. Trespass upon it is not permitted while it is under active cultivation, and the produce of the land is the property of the one who has worked it. Only palm trees are privately owned by those who have planted them; otherwise land that goes uncultivated for a longer period than is necessary to restore its fertility may be re-allotted. In some regions land worked by an individual is his because of his membership in a large relationship group, whose ownership derives from the power of its ancestors who had lived on this

land, whose bodies are buried in it, and whose spirits watch 423 171
over it. As has been shown in the discussion of property, land
in Haiti is owned privately, and, once title has passed, is subject 422
to no alienation, except at the will of the owner — an 423
attitude also held toward property of other categories, as is (685)
evidenced by the fact that most of the possessions of a man,
particularly his livestock, are marked for identification, and
theft is severely punished. Even the disposal of stray animals 427
whose owners cannot be identified must follow well-defined
legal procedure, in accordance with which they are held by
the officers of the commune for a stated period of time before
being sold at public auction. All marks on these animals are
carefully noted in the records, so that title to them may be
duly established.

In the organization of production and distribution an African 476
mold, if not full content, predominates. The co-operative 461
work-system, which is so important in maintaining agricultural 178
production, is directly related to comparable groupings
of West Africa, of which a distinctive form is the *dokpwe* of
Dahomey, described when the African origins of Haitian culture
were examined. The *combite,* as an instrument of cooperative
labor and mutual self-help, with its tradition of giving
no pecuniary reward for work done, but of making the
feast which comes at the end of the day's labor adequate return
— all these represent pure retentions of African practice.
Even more striking is the carry-over in the attitudes which go
with these outer forms — the manner in which the participants
look forward with pleasant anticipation to taking part
in *combites,* the enjoyment which they derive from their
group work, and the verve with which the work is done are
clear expressions of these attitudes. The role of the *combite-* [533]
song in exercising social control and enforcing conformity to [626]
local custom is entirely African, as is its function in stimulating
work by setting a rhythm for it.

African, too, is the institution of the market, though in this 443 171 178

443 case certain aspects of the historical development of Haiti
171 have doubtless tended to reinforce African custom. Reference
178 has been made to the fact that the great proportion of traders
are women, a truism in Africa as in Haiti, where by general
rule men are the producers and women the distributors of
[902] goods. In Haiti, however, the fact that for many decades men
were likely to be arbitrarily impressed into military service by
local chieftains when they came to town — particularly in
Mirebalais, which had always been one of the centers of Caco
activity — discouraged them from attending the markets.
Thus African usage has here been reinforced by the historical
443 fact of Haitian political instability. The fact that the proceeds
434 from trading belong to the woman who does the trading, and
562 that in consequence women are encountered who, though
178 married, command independent means and exercise full con-
171 trol over their resources, is a carry-over of African tradition
and, as in Africa, this gives to women a position in the economic world quite foreign to conventional European practice.

59 The form of the family as found in Mirebalais demonstrates
611 that the African social grouping which comprises all those de-
178 scended on one side of the family has largely disappeared
[171] there, though it is possible that at least the vestiges of it may
have survived in other regions of Haiti. Yet in West Africa,
though descent is legally counted on but one side of the
family, psychological adherence to the families of both par-
[177] ents is everywhere important. Therefore it is logical to assume
that this concept, reinforced by the pattern of dual descent
and double familial affiliation of the French, has been retained in Haiti to the neglect of the aboriginal larger groupings, where, as has been seen, not only is relationship counted on both sides of the family, but, more significantly, the right to reprimand and punish is held and exerted by elders in both the maternal and the paternal lines. On the other hand, it is apparent that the feeling for larger relationship groups has not been entirely lost, particularly in the paternal line, when

especially by the drummers. Experience among other Caribbean Negro cultures and in Africa itself has failed to reveal greater skill in calling forth intricate rhythms from batteries of drums than can be found at any Haitian religious gathering. The enthusiasm with which a man takes his place at a drum, the manner in which he loses himself in his drumming, the skill with which he maintains the time of his complex beats in common with two other drummers and those who manipulate the rattles and the iron, bespeak long training and a passionate devotion to the art. The same is true of dancing. The best drummer, the finest dancer, hold positions of esteem in the community, and on occasion their fame will go beyond the valley, an occurrence as unusual as it is valued. The excellence of the drumming and dancing and the concomitant artistry in song can be understood when one considers the age at which training is begun in these arts. At Mirebalais an infant of no more than two years has been seen to dance creditably, while a young boy of six gave a demonstration of drumming that spoke eloquently of his promise as a drummer of talent. Before every *vodun* dance the boys take over the drums while the younger girls dance to their rhythms. They are watched with a critical eye by their elders, who from time to time correct them or praise those who do well.

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The accompanying musical forms are almost entirely African in their rhythmic structure, but European influence is traceable in their melodic line, which varies from unchanged European folk-melodies to purely African songs. In the use of the falsetto, however, in the statement of a theme by a leader and its repetition by a chorus, and in the countless modulations introduced into the song, the singing is entirely African, as are the postures struck by those singing.

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The importance of the dance is apparent from the large range of dances. Of *vodun* dances there are the *avalou, or yanvalou*, a word meaning supplication in the speech of Whydah; the specialized steps for the various Radá and Pétro gods; for

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CHAPTER XIV

CATHOLICISM AND VODUN

IN considering the origins of Haitian religious belief and ritual, those African elements which have been retained in their aboriginal purity may be first presented. The importance of the Dahomean and Nigerian elements in the *vodun* cult are self-evident when the deities derived from the peoples of these areas are detailed. It has been stated that the name of one of the important "companies" of gods, Rada, is a contraction of the word *Arada*, which is the name of the Dahomean town Allada. This group includes Damballa Wedo, Aida Wedo, Aizan, Legba, Agwe Woyo, Agweto, Sobo, and Sobo-Bade, which come directly from Dahomey, where they are members of the heavenly pantheons; and Agasu, Siligbo, and Loko, who are sacred ancestors of Dahomean relationship groups. The term *Dahomey* itself also figures in the name of such *loa* as Erzilie Freda Dahomey, where Freda with all consistency represents a corruption of the name of Whydah, a Dahomean seaport. The Nago, or Yoruban peoples of Nigeria, have a religious system which parallels that of Dahomey, so that many Rada gods, such as 'Batala, the Yoruban "great god," or Ogun, the Yoruban deity of war, or Shango, the god of thunder, are of Nago origin; Badagri, on the other hand, is the name of a Nigerian town. A prominent *loa* derived from this general area not found to be exclusive to the Rada group is Gedeonsu, or Gede, a Dahomean totem. Of the Pétro group, Wangol (Roi

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776 d'Angole) is obviously Angola, while the designations Ibo
171 and Congo speak for themselves. Simbi is a Congo deity, as
are Bumba and Lemba. Finally, in the categories of gods im-
[162] portant in the regions of Haiti other than Mirebalais are the
Loa Sénégal, and the Loa Mondong, both of which are names
of African tribes mentioned in the early literature as contributing to the Haitian slave population. But all recognition of geographical names as such has disappeared, and they have been transmuted into designations of gods.

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199 Outstanding here is the word *vodun* itself, already indicated as Dahomean, where it is a general term for "deity," though in Haiti its use has become more restricted and the symbol for deity has become the word *loa*, or *mystère*. The origin of the designation *loa*, which has been claimed to be a corruption of the French *roi*, is debatable. It is true that in West Africa certain deities are regarded as kings, yet this derivation is not convincing in view of the fact that in the *vodun* cult as found in Haiti at present or as described in earlier sources the *loa* are never generally referred to as kings, something that tends to strengthen statements that have been made to the effect that the word comes from the language of a Congo tribe.[1] The source of the root *hun-*, which figures in the terms *hungan*, *hunsi*, and *humfort*, is clear, for in Dahomey it is a synonym for the word *vodun*. *Hungan* and *hunsi* are even more definitely traceable than *humfort*, since the ending *-gan*, the Dahomean word for chief, designates the priest as the chief of the spirits, and *-si*, "wife," is employed in the sense of "wife of the god" or his devotee, in Africa as in Haiti. The female counterpart of *hungan*, *mambu*, cannot be definitely assigned, but may be of Bantu derivation, and is certainly an African word.

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769 Other uncontaminated Africanisms can be discerned in the attitude of the Haitians toward the *loa* and in the ceremonies for them. One of the most characteristic is the inheritance of *loa* in families, a direct survival of the belief which not only

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makes for deification of the family dead, but constitutes the 171
oldest ancestor of a relationship group one of the great gods 178
and thus causes families to give primary allegiance to a re- 429
stricted number of deities. The most striking aspect of this 769
tradition preserved in Haiti is that all ceremonies must be 781
given by family groups, and at them only members of the fam- 796
ily may with propriety become possessed. Possession itself, and 171
the elements which constitute the possession complex — the 178
use of the drums, the rhythms associated with particular gods, 53
the importance of songs in calling the spirits, the mode of worship through specific dances for specific deities — these make up another series of Africanisms. In the dance itself the use of iron to sound basic rhythms for the drums, the outer form and function of the rattle, and the fact that the circle of participants always rotates in a counter-clockwise direction, are equally African. The modes of behavior to be observed as possession comes on and the psychological release that follows it both derive from the same source, as do the beliefs that rituals must be held on the days sacred to the particular god being worshipped.

Another retention of African tradition is a belief in the im- 171
portance of sacrifice. It will be remembered that it is held to 178
be more essential to "feed" the gods than to dance for them. 782
This is also the tradition of all peoples of the region from which the slaves were derived, and in a sense reflects the very immediate relationship that obtains between Africans, or Haitians, and their gods. Since in both regions each deity performs the double role of doing good for those who worship it properly and harassing those who neglect it, the importance of giving adequate sacrifices to avert evil is evident. In both Haiti and Africa, however, these may differ with the wealth of the individual giving the offering, with the number of persons who contribute toward the ceremony where offerings are given, or with the seriousness of the situation which the deity is being asked to remedy. That the gods permit such varia-

171 178 782 tion is a further comment both upon the human traits ascribed to them, and upon the realism with which they take cognizance — as only African gods can — of the financial position of their devotees!

171 178 776 778 It is not only in the immediacy of the Haitian gods to their worshippers and in their human qualities, however, that these beings have retained African traits, for in the full reciprocity that must prevail in the relationship between deities and their followers is to be seen a point of view that is entirely non-European. Between man and the gods the rule of *quid pro quo* must always be in operation; and this rule may only be regarded as but another contribution of Africa toward Haitian religious ideology. While this reciprocal giving flavors all aspects of worship whether it be of the *loa*, the dead, or the twins, it takes a yet more prominent, and more familiar place in the field of magic, since here the *engagement* owes much to European belief, though the element of reciprocity is much more emphasized than was ever the case in medieval European diabolism.

178 776 774 [184] The psychological values of the *vodun* cult, especially the general tone found in the feeling toward the terms *Guinée* or *Rada*, perhaps most convincingly show the attitudes that aided in the retention of things recognizably African. For while the Pétro gods are by no means viewed as altogether bad, or are always held unwelcome, the fact that in Mirebalais, as in Haiti generally, the Rada gods are those least feared, most desired, and in connection with whose cult wrongdoing is most rarely present, is of the greatest significance, especially when the related fact is recalled that the Pétro gods are the more powerful in the matter of evil magic, while the Rada deities are said to exert their power to protect their devotees from the dark forces that may be set in motion against them.

178 771 776 In attitudes toward the gods, then, in the names of the gods themselves, in the manner in which they function in the lives of Haitians, and in the importance of the ceremonial con-

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177	*Je crois en Dieu,*	I believe in God,
778	*Oui, Santa Maria.*	Yes, St. Mary.
533	*Santa Maria,*	St. Mary,
539	*Qui sorte nan Guinée.*	Who came from Guinea.
	Je crois en Dieu,	I believe in God,
	Oui, Santa Maria.	Yes, St. Mary.

Another for the Virgin of Allada, sung in Leogane, is as follows:

Santa Maria la Madaleine,	St. Mary Magdalene
Prié pou' loa yo.	Pray for their *loa.*
O Allada-e,	O Allada-e,
Sonné une sonne pou' moin,	Ring a bell for me,
Pour m'allé.	So I may go.
M'dit, Allada-o,	I say, Allada-o,
Sonné une sonne	Ring a bell
Pou' les pitites nagé.	For the drowned children.

353 778 776 171 177 Of these elements, the portraits of the saints, or *images,* offer one of the most vivid instances of the mingling of African and European elements in Haitian belief, for they are the outward symbol of the psychological reconciliation that has been effected between the saints of the Church and the African deities. This is nothing peculiar to Haiti alone. In West Africa, wherever Catholicism has obtained something of a foothold, certain pagan deities are regularly identified with saints of the Church, and the same phenomenon is found in Cuba [8] and Brazil.[9] This identification of saints with the *loa,* whether initiated as a ruse against the detection of African worship or emanating from a reasoned analogy, would seem in Haiti, at least, to act as a device to achieve an adjustment between two conflicting systems by emphasizing the resemblance between Catholic saints and African nature deities.
353 778 776 177 The importance of the *images* as symbolizing the reconcilia-

776 [821] rainbow, and this is called an *arc d'alliance* between him and Aida Wedo, his wife, whose characteristic dress is blue and
●[171] white. Sobo, who in Dahomey is the god of thunder, is also believed in Haiti to give thunder, though he is not thought to live in the sky. As in Africa, his symbol is the ram. Aizan lives in the water, and is a favored deity because he gives his devotees the power of healing and of divining.

Erzilie, a *loa* of considerable importance, is envisaged as a pale, trembling woman who also inhabits the water. She constantly changes her dresses, of which she has many. All agree that she is a fabulously wealthy woman, who wears golden chains about her neck and has many rings, a characterization derived from her identification with Mater Dolorosa, whose chromolithographs depict her with many rich ornaments. As a Rada *loa* she " eats " the same food as Damballa, and wears white, like this other god, but has Friday as her sacred day. In her less pleasant manifestation of Erzilie Gé Rouge, the red-eyed one, she is a member of the Pétro " squad," and is held to be the wife of Simbi d'l'eau, with whom she is believed to get on especially well, since they " eat " different foods. Simbi, who is worshipped on Tuesdays and inhabits the mango and calabash trees, is said to drink heavily, however, and occasionally becomes so boistrous in his cups that he destroys the furniture and otherwise makes himself so objectionable that Erzilie is forced to leave him until he becomes sober.

[171] Ogun, in Haiti as in Nigeria, is the god of war. The Nigerian Shango is also found, though the Haitians conceive Shango as a *loa* who acts as the servant of the Ogun deities,
782 particularly Ogun Badagri and Ogun Batala. Ogun " eats "
[822] red cocks and red beans mixed with rice, and his color, red, is worn by his devotees. To this fact may be referred the custom
[114] of the Caco warriors who fought against the American Ma-
[648] rines in 1918–20 to wear red as their distinguishing color, something referred to by Wirkus (pp. 22 ff.), though he

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CHAPTER XI

[1] Compare Parsons (I), 173–4, where the cult of twins is discussed and some of its rites described.

[2] Price-Mars (I), 35, mentions this as a power believed to be held by twins.

[3] The phrase "cult of the dead" as employed here must be sharply differentiated from its misuse by Seabrook (82 ff.).

[4] Cf. Price-Mars (I), 34.

[5] Price-Mars (I), 34, speaks of the custom of always burying charms with the dead.

[6] Wakes have been described by Seabrook, 89–91, and others, but in such a manner that it is difficult to dissect out the reality of what was witnessed from the imaginative elements.

[7] Cf. Wirkus, 221–3. The custom of giving the dead food at the grave, which he describes, is not followed when burial occurs in the Mirebalais town cemetery, nor, seemingly, elsewhere in the valley.

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[8] See the description of a commemorative rite for the dead in Price-Mars (I) 148–50.

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[9] This is a rule followed in West African practice.

CHAPTER XII

[1] An interesting attempt to account for this is found in St. John, 230–1, where he speaks of the "two Vaudoux sects," one good and one evil.

[2] St. Mery, i, 56. The term *garde* is almost entirely absent in later writings, the more sensational *wanga* (*ouanga*) being preferred.

[3] Léger, 55, note 34.

[4] Cf. Dorsainvil (I), 171.

[5] No better summary of this could be had than that in Parsons (I), 179, written after a single séance with a *gangan*.

[6] Pp. 324–31.

[7] Mr. J. C. Trevor informs me that during a recent field-trip to the Virgin Islands he discovered books of magic in common use, obtained from a Chicago dealer.

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[8] It is not without interest to note that in the case reported in a Port-au-Prince newspaper and reproduced in facsimile by Seabrook, 334, concerning a woman from the commune of Mirebalais accused of sorcery, the name of the woman was *Azéman*.

[9] Cf. Parsons (II), 596.

[10] See above, pp. 94–5.

[11] The closest correspondence

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to the Haitian *baka* found in the New World are the *bakru* of Dutch Guiana, who in turn derive from the "little folk" of West African belief, beings that are always important in making magic. See Herskovits, M. and F. (IV), 105–7.

[12] Dorsainvil (I), 130, mentions this rite.

[13] Notably by Seabrook, 92 ff., who made great capital of the concept and purported actually to have seen these beings! Parsons (II), ii, 592, Tale 77, I, reproduces a Haitian's account in Créole of how a Sorcerer goes about ensnaring a victim to make of him a *zombi*.

[14] Parsons (I), 178–9.

CHAPTER XIII

[184] [342]

[1] Price-Mars (II), 96 ff., gives a detailed description of the peasant house. The beehive-shaped hut mentioned by Craige, 36, is not found in Mirebalais, though the valley is but a short distance from Hinche, of which he was writing. Seabrook, 18, also describes the interior of a peasant house.

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[2] Charlevoix, ii, 42.

[3] St. John, 153.

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[4] Seabrook, 104 ff., devotes some space to a discussion of *pénitence*, but so changes its meaning to the Haitians that it is quite useless in making a serious comparison of data.

[5] See the discussion in Dorsainvil (I), 150, concerning other retentions of African motor behavior in Haiti.

[6] Craige, Seabrook, and Wirkus, all give lively accounts of cock-fights.

[7] Cf. Price-Mars (I), 1–15, for accounts of the manner in which stories are told in Haiti. It is to be noted that the African belief that a tale must not be told during the daytime persists there.

[8] A large collection of Haitian folk-tales has been published recently by Parsons (II), ii, 470–596.

[9] Audain has published what is perhaps the largest collection of Créole proverbs; his work, however, is unfortunately out of print.

CHAPTER XIV

[1] Dorsainvil (I), 158.

[2] Exceptions to this statement must be made in the case of the careful study of the relationship between Catholicism and *vodun* by Price-

789 all aspects of the natural and supernatural. But the reputable cult priest
771 does not dabble in "black" magic—the kind that maims or destroys human
793 beings. One who does so is said to "work with two hands": one for
154 the loa and one for evil. (The expression *servi dé main*—"serving with two hands"—is also applied to a cult chief who deals with deities of more than one "nation.") Many a cult priest in making his ritual flour drawings on the earth holds his left hand behind his back and draws with his right, giving testimony that he "works with one hand" only.

793 Each cult priest maintains his own cult temple, or *hounfor*. There are
794 no cult officials above him, as there is no formal religious organization
[346] beyond the hounfor itself. Within his own special community he is therefore
the chief religious functionary, the apex of an intratemple social organization. Under the cult priest, ordinarily, there are two grades of assistants, and below them two classes of servitors.

793 The cult priest is usually referred to as a *houngan*, a Fon (Dahomean)
787 title signifying "spirit chief." Sometimes he is called *gangan* (a Bantu
● 171 word meaning "conjuror" or "doctor")[2] or *capla*. He also is known by
the title *bocó* or *bocor*, which seems to be derived from *bocono*, the diviner
791 or priest of the Dahomean Fa cult.[3] The bocor is, in fact, sometimes referred to as a *divineur*, and he is regarded by some Haitians as a clairvoyant and a practitioner of magic. As in Dahomey, the bocor in Haiti foretells fate through the throwing of shells or chips, much in the manner of the secular game *mayamba*. He also reads destiny with small sticks or ashes. In earlier days the cult priest was sometimes known by the Yoruba name *babalao*, a title which has been corrupted to *papaloi*. A female cult
leader is known as a *mambo*. She is presumed to have, in a general way,
[562] the same powers as the houngan, though in some quarters her *connaissance*, or "understanding," is not regarded so highly, and her status is believed to be somewhat lower.

794 Directly under the houngan is his chief assistant, the *laplace*, and perhaps a little below him on the ladder, the *mambo caille*. The laplace is regarded as the vice-houngan, and he assumes responsibility for running the hounfor in the absence of his chief. The mambo caille, a woman, runs the cult center in the absence of both the houngan and the laplace. One step farther down the ladder is the *houngénicon*, who acts as a sort of chief of the main body of devotees. These high-ranking assistants to the houngan are sometimes called *badjicans*, or keepers of the altar.

[171] The servitors of the cult are known as *hounsi*, or "spirit wives," a name that was given to certain categories of cult servants in Dahomey.[4] There are two main groups of hounsi: *kanzo* (those who have passed through a ritual fire test) and *bossale* (those whose loa are wild or untamed). The

[2] [Footnote appears on p. 349, Category 116. --Analyst]

[3] [Gorer, *Africa Dances*, p. 129; Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, 208 ff. Cf. p. 349, Category 116. --Analyst]

[4] [Foot note appears on p. 349, Category 116. --Analyst]

> in the services. In the court, the bases of four sacred trees . . . are surrounded by circles of masonry [low brick walls]. These *reposoirs* are inhabited by the *loa* Legba, Ogoun, Loco and Saugo.* 000 346 778 333 776

There is little in Aubin's description to suggest that hounfors were much different a half century ago from what they are today. He errs in identifying the "thunder stones" solely with Damballa. But his eye for detail was acute. In 1950 a mambo in the neighborhood of this hounfor described by Aubin affirmed that some of the loa stones and old coins which he mentioned are still to be found among the properties of a hounfor in the Cul-de-Sac Plain. Others were lost in one of the cleric-inspired raids which despoiled cult temples of drums and other paraphernalia about fifteen years ago. 114 346 778 [797]

Many services are held outside the hounfor and the peristyle. Some rituals, such as animal sacrifices and "talking to the loa below the water," may take place some distance from the cult buildings. Indeed, various Vodoun ceremonies may be held at waterfalls, at the seashore, in sacred groves, in ordinary homes, in a boat at sea,* or under a sacred tree. 78

The rites of the hounfor are almost without number. They are associated with the supplication or conciliation of virtually countless deities, each of which has his own special service. There are services in multitudinous combinations and permutations for the dead, for twins, for albinos, and for unborn children. There are ceremonies for the elevation of hounsi and for initiation, smoke and fire ordeals, and tests of other kinds. There are *mangé loa* (feasts for the deities) and *mangé morts* (feasts for the dead). There are services for the sick, for the crops, and for the harvest. In one context or another, Vodoun relates to nearly every aspect and phase of life—and its counterpart, death. Since every region, every locality, and, in fact, almost every hounfor has developed its own ritual out of the common materials, it is possible to see hundreds of ceremonies without ever seeing precisely the same one twice. Yet the common elements bind them all together.

One such prime element is the possession, the "mounting" of the human body by one of the deities. Possession is a psychological phenomenon common to the rites of many cults throughout the world. It is known in Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. It is not the unique property of the African and his Haitian descendant. In the United States it is a commonplace not only among certain Negro cults but certain white cults as well. The United States Negro had ample West African inspiration for his seizures in the church and at the baptism. The intellectual meaning of these seizures has changed, as have their outward forms to a measurable extent, but their emotional content has not altered. [787]

* [Translated from the French of Aubin, En Haiti, pp. 57-59. Cf. p. 349, Category 116.--Analyst

* [Footnote appears on p. 349, Category 116.--Analyst]

his "horse" may trample in glowing coals, plunge his hands in boiling oil, 776
or play with red-hot iron bars. For Ogoun Chango is a fire-eater—a deity 787
of the forge and of battle. The deity Legba is characterized as a limping
old man. A "horse" possessed by Legba may cavort about on a kind of
cane-crutch called a Legba stick. Each loa has his distinctive mark. As the
Haitians say, "you learn about the loa by watching his horses."

In addition to having homes in Africa or below the water, most loa 776
have special residing places in Haiti, such as stones, caves, trees, waterfalls, 778
or springs. One may come across a boulder or a bamboo grove sacred to [782]
a certain loa, and food offerings are likely to be seen there. Many loa are
identified with some specific variety of tree and will "inhabit" all such
trees throughout the country. Loa Calbassie, for example, lives in the
calabash tree, and Loa Général Brisé in the chardette tree. Offerings to [782]
these deities are set out underneath the tree or hung in its branches, and
services may be held around the trunk.

Loa also live in the old Carib and Arawak celts which are found from
time to time. These "loa stones," as they are called, are identified by their
forms and their ability to pass certain tests. Some Haitians declare the
stones must be able to "whistle," to perspire when blown upon, and to
"talk." The loa stones ordinarily are passed on from one generation to
another, in the hounfor and in the peasant hut alike. In this way the loa
who inhabit them are inherited. Sometimes, but rarely, stones are sold; [432]
disposing of a loa stone requires an elaborate ceremony to guarantee that [782]
the seller will not be injured by the loa, who is likely to feel "wounded."
In such a ceremony the loa is fed and placated and asked to go his way in
peace. The loa stones are sometimes called "thunder stones," in the belief [171]
that they were hurled to earth by the deities Kebiosu, Sobo, and Chango
(all of whom had similar functions among the Arada and Yoruba
peoples of West Africa). The stones are cared for by their owners with
the greatest reverence.

Loa are acquired by individuals in various ways. Many Haitians hold 776
that every infant is born with a *mait' tête*—a spirit who is "master of the
head." In this light, no individual is without a loa, although the deity may
never manifest interest in the individual by an act of possession. A man
may acquire a loa in the course of his life, although in that event the
original mait' tête must be retired from his head. The "inherited" loa
are usually not the personal deities but the special protectors of the household or the hounfor and are known as "loa of the house" or "family loa."

Should a man acquire a new loa to replace the old as his mait' tête, he 776
must undergo a ceremony known as *lavé tête*—the "washing of the head." 789
The old loa is retired and sent away, leaving the field clear for the new

776 one. Sometimes a loa who is making life too hard for a devotee will be
789 retired without a replacement. The "washing of the head" must be accompanied by ritual safeguards, and all possible circumstances must be
[828] taken into account by the officiating cult priest. There are many stories of people who became mentally deranged as a result of the removal of their loa from their heads.

776 The mait' tête must also be removed from the head of a person who dies.
764 Should this not be done, the spirit of the deceased will go to reside "below
[775] the water" and may cause trouble for the family. This loa is usually transferred to a special jar as a temporary resting place, and later perhaps into the head of another member of the family.

776 Though the loa is a powerful ruling force in the life of the individual,
787 the human "horse" has controls over his deity too. He may reproach or
789 admonish his loa for bad behavior or for failing to protect him. He may expose the loa's irresponsibility in public through the use of songs in religious rites. And though the loa is frequently encouraged to "enter," steps may be taken to restrain him from possession. This is called *marré loa* —"tying the loa." A woman may "tie" her loa by fixing a hairpin in her hair in a special way. A man may do it by placing his hands in cold water.[2]

776 Nevertheless, the loa are always lurking in the background. They are a constant and dramatic element in the religious life of the people. They may sometimes be controlled by the houngan, but they are an authority stronger than the priesthood. They give advice, courage, consolation, and status to their followers. They add much to an otherwise hard and ungenerous environment and evoke remembrances of Africa from which
[152] the Haitians' ancestors were uprooted. They can also cause concern and anxiety; for the loa are not always benevolent, and they are frequently unpredictable.

776 Many of the loa are ancient deities, sib-founders and ancestors who loom
● 171 out of a misty, half-forgotten past. Nananbouclou, Legba, and Ayida Wèdo have been known for many lifetimes in Dahomey. Chango, Ogoun, and Loko were old spirits in Nigeria before the first slave ships sailed from Africa to the New World. Their names and many others in present-day Haiti come from an ancient lore. They recall places, tribes, and old kingdoms from Senegal in northwestern Africa to the heart of the Congo.
[182] They are a bond which holds the people of Haiti to Africa. In the mountains people sometimes say, "Haiti is the child of Dahomey," or "Haiti is the child of Guinée." The gods divide their time between their Haitian and their African children.

776 Yet in some respects the Haitians' concept of their loa is no longer purely
177 African. The African religious patterns have been infiltrated by the lore

171

797

of the Catholic Church and fused with old folk beliefs of Europe. In 776
Dahomey, which was the wellspring for much of Haiti's culture, there 171
was no supreme deity quite like the one introduced to the slaves by the 177
missionaries. There was a pantheon of gods with Mawu and Lisa at the 797
top. They were children of a common parent, Nananbuluku. None of these deities was strictly comparable to our idea of a supreme being. Nananbuluku survives in Haiti as Nananbouclou or Nananbélécou, one of many loa. Among the neighboring Yoruba the high god was Olorun. Like the Dahomean Mawu and Lisa, Olorun was quite remote from the lives of men. The gods who were invoked and placated were the several hundred *orisha* created by Olorun. The nearby Ashanti people had a simpler pantheon, with the sky god Nyame supreme among them.

In the present Haitian concept of the supernatural, God is at the very 771
apex of the pantheon, though he is distinctly of another order. His power 776
as the supreme source of all things is fully recognized. A Haitian song, 78
associated with Vodoun ritual but of probable recent origin, goes:

> C'est Bondieu qui voyé moin, quand li vlé moin l'apprend. [Ex. 37] [539]
>
> It is God who sent me, when he wants me he'll take me.

Another song, from the Guinée service, goes:

> Oh, Kitta, oh so'ti nan dleau, li tout mouillé!
> Oh, nen point houngan passé Bondieu nan pays-ya! [Ex. 36]
>
> Oh, Kitta comes out of the water, he is dripping wet!
> Oh, there is no houngan in this country greater than God!

Although it is recognized, or at least stated, that God is a supreme force, God is not regarded as the entire supernatural force of the world. In many Vodoun services the houngan may invoke, as separate categories of the unseen, the loa, the dead, the *marassas* (twin spirits), and God. Haitians do not have a consistent schematized picture of the supernatural world. God comes first, but (as in West Africa) he is less immediate than the loa. He is identified with destiny; yet within the framework of that destiny man's lot can be bettered or worsened through dealings with the dead, the baka and lou-garos (demons and vampires), and the cult priests.

In many of the folk tales of Haiti, God appears as another character in 776
a cast which may include as protagonists animals, loa, Christian saints, 539
and ordinary men and women. One such tale is about a visit which all the dogs decided to pay to God. They started off through the woods together, but one of them was distracted by the smell of carrion. He left his friends for a brief time, found the carrion, and ate some of it. Then he hurriedly joined his companions again. Together they came to God's house and were admitted to the parlor, where they sat around making polite conver-

called St. Patrick and sent him down to stop the ceremony. St. Patrick 776
approached the hounfor and sang: 539

Factionnaire ouv'é bayè pou' moin passé!

And again Bocor Zandolite came to the gate and sang:

Wa wa ilé londja londja!
Bocor Zandolite wa wa ilé londja londja!

He took St. Patrick by the hands, pirouetted him around, and a loa came into St. Patrick's head, too.

Another week went by, and when St. Patrick didn't return, God sent St. Michael. The same thing happened to St. Michael. God then sent St. Anthony, and later he sent St. Peter. But when St. Peter didn't return, God became very angry indeed. He hadn't slept for weeks. So he decided to go down himself and put an end to the affair. He approached the hounfor singing "Factionnaire ouv'é bayè pou' moin passé!" And Bocor Zandolite replied as he had before. He took God by the hands to greet him. He shook hands downward three times, then he pirouetted God to the right and to the left. God suddenly staggered and reeled from one end of the habitation to the other. The drummers beat a special salute, and the singers sang loudly and clapped their hands, for God had a loa in his head.

This tale appears to relish the superiority of the loa over God. Yet there 776
is no sense of sacrilege. Although the Haitian concept of God is that of 539
a supreme force, and a source of good, the Christian deity also has some 171
of the attributes of paramount gods in certain West African religious 177
systems which make him less remote and even, on occasion, somewhat fallible. He figures in Haitian lore very much like the Ashanti sky god, Nyankonpon, who has dealings with animals and human beings and is sometimes outwitted by them. Although Nyankonpon has the power to dispense favors, justice, and punishment to mortals, he himself lives within, rather than superior to, a well-established physical system. His marvelous deeds are only slightly superior to those of other, lesser gods, or of sorcerers, or of the trickster Anansi. In fact, in one Ashanti tale Nyankonpon finds himself very much in the same situation as God in the Haitian tale, being forced to dance to the music of the trickster's drum.

The Christian saints, too, have been incorporated into the Haitian sys- 776
tem, and they also have been syncretized with Vodoun elements. They 177
have become identified with various loa according to their most obvious characteristics. St. Patrick, because he is always pictured with snakes, has become one with Damballa and Ayida, who are also symbolized by snakes. Ezilie Fréda, the female loa characterized by purity, has become

776 one with the Holy Virgin. St. Jacques has become one with Ogoun, St.
177 George with Linglessou, St. Anthony and St. Christopher with Legba,
guardian of the highway, and St. Nicholas with Marassa Trois. In northern Haiti the word *zange* (from the French, *les anges*—the angels) sometimes is used synonymously with loa or mystère. As for the saints, they are sometimes identified with one loa, sometimes with another.

776 No one in Haiti knows all the loa. Some of them are so ancient as to be
177 nearly forgotten. Others are spontaneous creations or revelations on the
178 part of a possessed person. Some loa names may be the result of a devotee's
seizing upon a word or phrase in a religious song and imparting to it the concept of a loa. Sometimes a word in a phrase of *langage* is taken to be a loa's name, and sometimes agglutinated Creole words become the name of a loa.

776 The possibility of frequent additions to the list of loa is heightened still
178 further by the general illiteracy of the Haitian people and the lack of a
197 stabilizing influence in the written word. The Creole language has
[193] marked regional differences. Furthermore, change of consonants or vowels
is a commonplace occurrence, so that a single loa's name may have several forms. One may well wonder whether Aza, Adja, and Akadja were not originally a single individual. Nevertheless, in the Haitian scheme they are now different personalities.

776 There is one more complicating factor in identifying loa or compiling
171 a comprehensive roster—the use of multiple names. In addition to the
552 names by which they are generally known, many of the deities have a
variety of nicknames. Some of these nicknames are in Creole, some appear to be of West African provenience. The deity Agwé, for example, is frequently called Coqui-nan-Mer—Coqui-in-the-Sea. A loa may have four, five, or even more such nicknames. Sometimes short forms are used. Damballa may be called Da, Sobo may be called So, Azaka may be called Za. In addition, some deities have "secret" names, which theoretically are known only to the priesthood and the inner circle of servitors. Multiple naming and the reservation of certain names for special occasions appear to have West African precedents.

In the naming of the loa no neat and methodical system is apparent at any point. The "surname," or what may be in some cases a generic designation, may appear first or last. One may hear Ogoun Chango or Chango Ogoun, Général Brisé or Brisé Général, Congo Savane or Savane
[551] Congo. (This is characteristic of everyday speech. A former president of
Haiti, Nord Alexis, is often called Alexis Nord.) The "surname" can be a description of "tribal" or "national" affiliation, regional provenience, character and temperament, or an indication of function. Thus we find

776 171 552 Boulicha Nago, or Boulicha of the Nagos; Èzilie Wèdo and Èzilie Doba, possibly from Wèdo and Doba in Dahomey; Tijean Pied Chèche (Tijean Dry Feet), a loa of bad character, "dry feet" signifying malevolence; and Legba Grand Chimin, or Legba of the Highway.

776 552 Identification of loa is often made difficult by the use of the generic or family title only. The term Nago covers all the loa associated with this "nation" (Nago Piment, Amine Nago, Boulicha Nago, etc.), but in a song or service any one of them is as likely as not to be referred to simply as Nago, with no clue to his exact identity. Each listener takes the name to designate the Nago loa with whom he is most familiar, unless possession occurs and the loa is otherwise identified by the behavior of his "horse."

776 174 552 On the whole, it appears that there was in the beginning a strong awareness of regional origins. There are names among the cult pantheons which indicate Senegal, Dahomey, Nigeria, Congo, and Angola origins. Many loa bear the names of African towns. Among the Ogoun family of loa, for example, are such regional designations as Badagry and Jèkkè, the first being a town in Nigeria and the second in Dahomey. It is clear that a detailed geographical knowledge of certain West African regions would considerably illuminate a study of Haitian loa.

346 174 776 552 Local shrines, too, doubtless enter into the naming system. Badagry is the name of a town in Nigeria, and it is also a Dahomean word designating the structure in which young men used to be circumcised and initiated into the secrets of warriors. In this particular light, the loa Ogoun Badagry might be regarded as the deity of that particular ritual center.

776 801 In discussing the complicated relationship of their loa, Haitians sometimes say: "There are seven of everything. There are seven Marassas, seven Ogouns, seven Èzilies. There are seven brothers and sisters in every family of loa." Or they say something such as: "There is only one Legba, but there are seven. There is only one Ogoun, but he has many moods and names. There is only one Èzilie, but she has seven faces." This concept is also held by the Arara (Arada) cult of Cuba. It is interesting to note the extent to which duplications and new generations of loa have been set up into family households in the most literal sense. Those families are still growing. In the Gèdé family I have counted more than thirty seemingly distinct individuals (see Appendix I).[1] Herskovits mentions a number of others, and still more have been cited by other writers on the subject. When I pointed out to some Haitians that the Gèdé family numbered far more than seven individuals, they were unable to account for the situation. Other Haitians took the vast army of Gèdés as a matter of course. The Ogoun family, too, is large and growing. Twenty-seven Ogouns are listed in the compilation in Appendix I. Still more have been recorded elsewhere.

[1] [See p. 317 ff., Category 116. -- Analyst]

[P.30]

4. Death Rites

775 776 The community of the Haitian is one that extends far beyond his immediate family and his village, for it takes in not only the various loa but multitudinous dead relatives and ancestors. Some Haitians believe that the dead live in close proximity to the loa, in a place called "Under the Water." Others hold that the dead have no special residing place. But it is the view of many that a dead person may eventually become a loa in his own right. How this happens is not entirely clear. Under certain circumstances the spirits of the newly dead do not go quietly on their way but [769] remain behind to annoy and harass the living. They must be buried with suitable ritual and properly placated throughout the years; otherwise their activities and influences will be unpredictable. Many of them, under special conditions, become almost indistinguishable from loa. And a few, in the course of time, become minor deities in the pantheons. The main loa of the Pétro cult, Dan Pétro, formerly was believed by some Haitians to be a houngan of the eighteenth century who had been buried without having ● [171] his own loa removed from his head. There are African precedents for deified ancestors' becoming deities. Indeed, some of the great *vodouns* and *orisha* of the Dahomean and Yoruban pantheons in West Africa are believed to be deified clan ancestors or great kings.

775 171 Whether they achieve the status of loa or not, the spirits of the dead must forever be coped with. This Haitian view of the dead is essentially that held in many parts of West Africa. Speaking of West African belief in general, Maurice Delafosse noted:

> After a creature dies, only his spirit remains. It survives with the same character, the same personality, affections and hatreds as during his lifetime, but it can no longer command the vital breath. It becomes all the more powerful on escaping from the confines of its material envelope, since it no longer needs to direct and control the functions of the body, and is not itself regulated by the vital breath. . . . These spirits are all of the same nature. They are invisible but can see and judge everything that happens. They are easily angered and mete out severe punishment to anyone

offending them. They are also vain and capricious, can be conciliated by prayers and gifts, and propitiated by sacrifices. This animistic religion . . . includes many variants of the worship of countless spirits of men's ancestors and innumerable spirits of nature, all ranking as gods.[1] 775 171

Another observer, speaking of the Bapindi, the Babunda, and other related tribes of the western Congo draws quite similar conclusions:

> The people of these tribes recognize a supreme deity, Nzambi, creator of all things. But this supreme spirit is too distant from men to enlist active worship on their part. The basic worship is to the ancestors of the clan. The clan is in effect a community consisting of all the living and the dead descended from a common ancestor. Towards the dead it is necessary to make offerings as a mark of deference when one wishes to consult them on problems. The dead are spoken to through the chief, who uses a special drum for this purpose. The dead have the responsibility of protecting their descendants.[2]

Among the Bantu people of South Africa, also, the worship of ancestors is based upon the belief that when a man dies he continues to influence the lives of his relatives remaining on earth. He is as interested as ever in descendants who remain "outside on the earth," but indifferent to members of other communities unless they bear them some grudge. The characters of people who die are not changed by death. They are as prone to jealousy in death as in life, and as rancorous toward descendants who wound their vanity, flout their wishes, squander their bequests, or infringe the ancient laws and customs of their clans; but they are also as willing as ever to help those of their lineage who treat them with becoming respect and obedience.[3] The affairs of mankind in general do not concern them; they are exclusively interested in their own family and tribe, and without their help and guidance their living descendants cannot hope to flourish. As long as the moral code is strictly followed, they confer blessings and abundance; but if offended by any breach of custom, they can also send drought, cattle plague, tribal or personal disaster, sickness, or death.[4] 171 769 775

This deeply rooted concept of the relationship of the family to its ancestors continues to motivate the Haitian in his observance of services for the dead. 769 775

In addition to the ordinary dead with whom the Haitian has to deal, there are the spirits of twins, known as *marassas.* As there are feasts for the ordinary family dead, the mangé morts, so there are feasts for living and dead twins, the mangé marassas. Twins are believed to have special powers, and even when alive they are given more than usual consideration. The spirits of dead twins are especially willful and capricious, and unless properly placated they may cause illness and misfortune. Once each year, on dates fixed by local custom, special services are held for the marassas. 769 775 845

[1], [2] [Footnotes appear on p. 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

[3] [Willoughby, The Soul of the Bantu, pp. 88-89. Cf. p. 350 Category 116.--Analyst]

[4] [Footnote appears on p. 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

764 invoked the loa, the pallbearers brought the body forward as though to go straight ahead, but then they began to lurch and sway as though an invisible force were pushing them around. They veered as though to take the right turn, and again they lurched and staggered. At last they turned toward the left, and in this direction they found the road clear. The houngan thanked the Master of the Crossroads, the widow took her place at the head of the procession, and it proceeded on its way to the cemetery.

793 In the services for a dead houngan described by Simpson, the body is
764 placed in a coffin, which is carried to all the places sacred to the loa of the
766 hounfor before being taken to the cemetery. First it is taken to the sacred
trees where the loa reside, then to the sacred spring "whose waters have
cured many sicknesses which physicians had pronounced incurable . . .
[823] The bearers of the coffin circle the spring several times. The coffin is swung
[toward] each of the four cardinal points." Afterward the procession continues its way to the burial ground.[17]

766 But the treatment given to the dead may vary according to the manner
174 in which they died. Leyburn notes, for example, that "a person struck by
761 lightning . . . would have no ceremonies at all, for lightning is an act
of God."[18] It may well be that the Haitian rationale for not holding ceremonies for an individual killed by lightning is that God has already held the final ceremony. But in the Haitian mind all deaths are, in the last analysis, acts of God, even though magic, poison, or accident may have played an immediate part. Why, then, should the corpse struck by light-
171 ning be treated so differently? The answer would appear to lie in a custom
766 of the Yoruba of dispensing with all burial rites for persons killed by
761 lightning, such persons being considered enemies of the lightning deity
[174] Chango. In Dahomey, Herskovits reports, the same attitude prevails in
regard to persons killed by lightning:

> If a person is killed by lightning he . . . stands convicted by this fact of some grave crime which has incurred the displeasure of the god of the Thunder Pantheon (Xevioso). A person so killed is never buried by his family, but the body is turned over to the chief priest and cult-members of these deities. It is believed that a man killed in this fashion remains upright until the chief priest questions him and forces him to confess the crimes he had committed to be so punished. No one touches any
> [768] of the belongings of such a man, not even his money. The house in which he lived
> [784] is allowed to go to ruin, an *azan* of palm fronds being placed around it to guard
> [784] against anyone entering it. The moveable property of such a man, his clothes, his
> [824] stools, and his dishes, are thrown away at the crossroads . . .[19]

766 The burial of a Haitian who dies of smallpox likewise differs from that of one who dies a "normal" death. The victim of smallpox is buried without a coffin in a segregated part of the cemetery. The reason for this lies

[17] [Simpson, *Op. Cit.*, p. 161. Cf. P. 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

[18] [Leyburn, *The Haitian People*, P. 156. Cf. P. 350, Category 116. -- Analyst]

[19] [Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, 398. Cf. P. 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

beyond the obvious fear of contagion. In his study of Dahomey, Hersko- 766
vits notes: [171]

> . . . Small-pox is believed to be sent as a punishment for grave offenses in the eyes of these [the Sagbata] deities, and it is taken to indicate that either the dead person himself or a member of his family has committed some heinous crime such as the practice of black magic. A person who dies of small-pox may only be buried after permission has been given by the chief priest of the Earth cult.[20]

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Thus, in Haiti, though the connections with the past are clouded, it is 753
clear that victims of lightning and smallpox are treated as a special class 761
of criminals or malefactors. 766

Ordinary malefactors such as malevolent criminals and murderers— 766
until recent years, at least—were not buried in the common graveyard. They, too, were segregated at the periphery of the cemetery or buried at the edge of a trail or road where the traffic would not permit them to rest and where their graves would be under constant surveillance. The roadside grave sometimes was also the fate of a person killed by lightning.

That these special burials are related to the Dahomean and Yoruban 761
concepts of retribution for crimes against the deities is supported by the 753
similarity of treatment accorded victims of lightning and disease and 766
common criminals. In Haiti, Herskovits observes: "Those who die of small- [174]
pox or leprosy, suicides, or persons shot as a punishment for crime are [721]
not buried in the communal cemetery, but in special sections of the grave- [681]
yard," the suicides and criminals being set apart from the others.[21] [762]

Graves found near the seashore, lake shores, or riverbanks frequently 766
are declared to belong to persons who died of drowning.

Approximately nine days after a person's death, the "last prayers" are 765
said, and the soul of the deceased is presumed to have departed from the 53
house. Once more, under the tonnelle outside there are games, storytelling, [775]
and singing. On this night, however, there is also drumming and dancing [524]
of a special kind. Usually it is the Juba, or Martinique, dance, which is believed to be specially enjoyed by the dead, and it is the older people, rather than the young, who participate. These festivities are believed to give cheer to the deceased and to "encourage" him on his way. On the [769]
next night comes the mangé mort, the feast for the family dead, a ritual which continues periodically through the years.

Sometimes in Haiti you may come upon an old tomb or grave before 764
which a dish of specially prepared food has been set. This is part of the 769
mangé mort ritual.

A man may make provision in advance of his death for the rites which 763
follow his burial. He may designate special animals to be killed, leave 764

[20] [Ibid., pp. 397–398. Cf P 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

[21] [Herskovits, Life in a Haitian Valley, P. 214. Cf. P. 350, Category 116.--Analyst]

794 in a circle around the two boiling pots. On the seventh circuit of the
787 course, the laplace stopped him at the first pot. The houngan grasped the
789 man's free hand and, bending down, dipped it into the boiling oil. There
796 was no visible indication of pain. They moved to the second pot, and the
773 man's hand was dipped again. They proceeded again to the first pot, where the dipping was repeated, then back again to the second pot. The neophyte's hand entered the boiling oil seven times in all. He made no sound, showed no resistance, no reflexes. Then the hounsi took him back to the hounfor. It was all over. After three days of isolation, they said, he would be kanzo.

The houngan peeled an orange, while everyone crowded close to watch. In it he found a two-gourde note. He peeled another orange and found in it a slip of paper with the name of a woman on it. She came forward, and everyone laughed. She was an old woman, the oldest of the hounsi. The houngan held the two-gourde note between his teeth. The old woman took the other end of the note in her teeth, but she had to kiss the houngan before he would let go.

796 The ritual of brulé zin, or kanzo, is of unmistakable West African ori-
794 gin. Herskovits has described a ceremony in Dahomey which in many
● 171 details could easily have taken place in Haiti. The Dahomean rite was in honor of the gods of the Thunder pantheon. Here, too, we find a pot of boiling palm oil, in which are the sacred dumplings: "When the fire had finally subsided and only a faint column of smoke issued from the pot, the initiate came dancing toward it, thrust her hand into the boiling oil, and lifted out a dumpling. . . ."[8] A

FAMILY RITES AT LÉOGANE

769 These services for family ancestors took place in the mountains above
796 Léogane at the ancestral home of my friend Libera Borderau. They were
787 conducted on the grounds of his grandmother's house. The ritual began
778 with dancing. Against the wall of the house sat the three drummers with their Arada drums. Near them, leaning against the wall, were the flags of the family loa. Also near by was a long high table serving as a makeshift altar called the *pé*. In the very center of the table in a clean white dish lay eight loa stones—old Carib artifacts. The stones were identical in shape, all of them perfectly symmetrical, resembling small, pointed cigars. In the *pierre-loas* lived the family deities, and much of the ceremony was built around them. The stones had been bathed and polished in oil for the occasion. Set around the plate of stones were numerous small *criches* (French, *cruches*—clay water jugs), glass bottles, and earthenware jars which also contained loa. On the low bench before the table, seven dishes

[8] A [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 165. Cf P 351, [illegible]]

The yam

itself was transplanted from Africa, where in old times as well as in mod- 244
ern it was a staff of life among those who lived by agriculture. The word 17
"yam" is known throughout large parts of Africa, crossing language lines 192
and forests. It signifies the big root on which the African is so dependent, and it also has the general meaning of "eat." In Senegal it is called *nyami*, while across the width of Africa and in the upper Nile region it is called *nyam*.

In Haiti the yam is a tie with the past and a symbol of fertility. When 244
the yams are plentiful, there is food for the winter months and a sense of 769
well-being. When the yam crop is poor, there is insecurity and even hun- 182
ger. Whatever occurs, lurking in the background is the shadow of the family ancestors, for it is they who have the power to enhance the crops or blight them. This is the concept around which the mangé yam is built.

The annual harvest feast, on the twenty-fifth of November, is rooted in 244
the need for placating the ancestors, so that the dead will insure the fertil- 796
ity of the fields. Before the feast, no yams may be eaten, for the crop must 769
be "baptized" first. Should this rule be violated the yams will spoil and 184
those who eat them will become sick. The precise form of the mangé yam varies from region to region. Sometimes it is held on the premises of the cult chief for the community at large. More traditionally it is held on the family *habitation*, with a houngan in attendance. It is felt that an important obligation rests upon those who have wandered away from the homestead to return for the occasion. For the fate of the family depends to a large degree upon the successful appeal to the vast host of the ancestral dead, and the solidarity of the living in this effort is regarded as vital. Even if one belongs to a Christian sect which proscribes Vodoun, he is obligated and ready to come, for the welfare of the family is paramount. Catholics, Adventists, and Protestants alike participate. As the Haitians say, it is an affair for all who eat yams, and that means all Haitians.

Yams are washed and prepared for eating during the service. They are 244
cut in small portions, placed in dishes or calabash bowls, and offered to 796
the dead, who have prime rights. All categories of the dead are fed—those 769
who are remembered, those who can be recalled only by name, and those whose names are forgotten. The dead of Haiti are invoked, then the dead of Africa. The marassa dead are fed from separate gourds or bowls, and a special table is set for the ancient dead who move slowly because of their age or infirmities, and who may take a long while to arrive at the mangé. A share of the yams is offered to the family loa. Then the members of the family receive symbolic portions. There is singing, drumming, and dancing, and sometimes ritual baths are taken. Afterward, when the yam feast is ended, the crops may be gathered, stored, and eaten.

243 In the Artibonite Valley, where much rice is grown, a similar ceremony
796 takes place before the rice is gathered from the fields. In this ceremony it
769 is rice that is shared with the family ancestors, who have first rights, and
with close friends who have aided with the planting. This feast is called
[252] *mangé diri*, or sometimes *gouté diri*, the tasting of the rice. Small amounts
of rice are taken from the fields, cooked with red beans or Congo beans,
or perhaps made into dumplings. The farmer's friends and relatives gather
[524] while the food is still cooking, and play games such as *wari* and *trois-sept*.
[538] The children play *gage* games and sing songs, and sometimes a *maît
conte*—a storyteller—comes to entertain them.

When the food is finally ready, the family ancestors are given their share. The farmer takes a calabash bowl of the rice and walks around the house grounds calling upon his immediate ancestors to accept their share. He drops a little food on the ground for the remembered dead, for the unknown dead who preceded them, for the Haitian dead, and for the dead of Africa. He also drops small portions for the dead twins, the dead albinos, the deformed dead, and the dead who have lost limbs, and for the distressed dead who have been improperly buried, or who may not have received the feasts that were due them. Afterward, he offers food to those who died of drowning, or who were lost at sea and never heard of again.

Each course is shared with the ancestors. The farmer takes a pitcher of water, spilling a little here and a little there until the dead have quenched their thirst. He also gives a little of everything to the family loa. Then the calabashes are set out on a bench or table reserved for the dead, and this food is not disturbed. Food for the marassas is set out separately on the ground in three small *couis*, or gourd dishes.

The family ancestors whose good will has made the harvest possible
having been taken care of, the food is now shared among the extended
family and the friends who helped in the fields. Later there are prayers
[782] to the loa, the saints, and God, led by the houngan or a prêt' savane. To
[776] finish the affair, there may be Juba-type dances for the older people, while
[535] the children watch or play *gage* games.

[524] Only after this service are the farmer and his family and his *coumbite*
(mutual labor group), if he belongs to one, free to go out and harvest
the rice.[4]

243 These feasts of the rice and yam harvests are not of New World origin.
243 Similar harvest festivals for yams or rice are held over a wide area of West
796 Africa. There, as in Haiti, the fundamental concern is with the family
769 ancestors, whose good will must be constantly nourished so that the rains
● 171 continue to fall, the crops flourish, and human beings remain fertile.
Among the Ashanti of Ghana, for example, the yam and rice harvests are

[4] [Account given by Jean Ravel Pintro. Cf. P.351, Category 116. -- Analyst]

celebrated with elaborate rituals for the dead. As in Haiti, great impor- 243
tance is laid on the presence of all living descendants, whose numbers are 244
calculated to influence the ancestors' behavior. And as in Haiti, the first 776
yams and the first rice are offered to the dead, and only after the family 769
ritual does the family divide the crop.[5] 171

SERVICE FOR THE ASSOTOR DRUM

The *assotor* drum is the largest and most sacred of all Haitian drums. 534
Around it is built an impressive and elaborate service known as the *mangé* 776
assotor, which, according to local traditions and circumstances, may be 778
held as often as every three years or as infrequently as every twenty-one years. The period between mangés always consists of an odd number of years. A houngan from Jérémie declared the service might properly be held every three, five, or seven years. Another cult priest in the Cul-de-Sac Plain said it could be held every seven, seventeen, or twenty-one years. The assotor is known as the *plus grand moune* (the most venerable "man") of the hounfor. However, few cult centers possess an assotor. "Assotor c'est fort bagaille, c'est pas zaffai tout moune" (The assotor is powerful, it isn't everybody's affair), Haitians say. This is what a man from Jérémie tells about it:

"The assotor is the greatest of all things in the hounfor. The Rada drums 534
are only for the Dahomey nation. The Congo drums are for the Congo 776
nation. The assotor is a man of Dahomey, but he is for all nations. It is 778
for all loa—Pétro, Congo, Bumba, Dahomey. The assotor belongs to 184
Dahomey, but when there is a great service the assotor is the host to the 787
loa of every rite, the loa of Haiti and of Africa. When the assotor is played, [776)
the loa are awakened everywhere. Loa who have been forgotten by the Creoles (Haitians) will come to the service and mount people, and when the loa have gone, many people don't know what loa has been riding them. Some ancient spirits from far away come only to the assotor service, and when it is over they aren't heard of again.

"The assotor drum is not for small things, it is for great occasions. For 534
some people there are no occasions in their whole lives great enough for 776
an assotor service. When all other things have failed, it is only then that 778
the assotor is called upon. 787.

"If a big houngan should have an assotor drum, he can have only one, and it is the chief of the hounfor. All other drums are its servants. You can make an assotor, but it is not necessarily an assotor. It may look like an assotor and not be an assotor. To be an assotor it must not only have the shape of an assotor but it must be accepted by the loa. There was a houngan near Jérémie who made an assotor and held a great service with it,

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[5] [Informant: Albert Kofi Prempeh, Ghana. [115)
Cf. p. 351, category 116. -- Analyst]

The importance of water in Vodoun has a fundamentally West African character. Among the Yoruba and the Ashanti and in Dahomey, for example, water rites are a significant aspect of religious ritual. Herskovits notes the frequency of religious pilgrimages to streams in West Africa. 171 771 823 796 778

> In one instance, at Abeokuta, a bedecked procession of worshipers left a shrine atop a high hill, followed a long path to the riverside over two miles away, and returned before the ceremonies could be carried out at the shrine of the god. On one occasion, in Dahomey, the bed of the sacred stream run dry was "filled" from nearby wells so that this water could be ritually redrawn for use in an especially important ceremony. Among the Ashanti, pilgrimages to Lake Bosumtwe and other sacred bodies of water regularly occur. And it is on such occasions that the spirit of the river or lake or sea manifests itself, by "entering the head" of the devotee and causing him to fling himself, possibly possessed, into the water.[8]

So it is also in Haiti, where possession at the river's edge may cause the devotee to leap into the river. At Saut d'Eau, possessed persons plunge into the waterfall without regard for their safety, being in the care of the loa who have mounted them. 823 787 778

Into this water complex the Christian rite of baptism has been easily absorbed, providing merely a new act of veneration for water and its properties. In the Haitian mind baptism is not far removed from the *lavé tête* ritual, the washing of the head, or the *rafraichi tête*, the "refreshing" of the head, both of which are acts in propitiation of the loa.[9] So related is the baptismal concept in the Haitian mind, that the term "baptize" is used to describe the lavé tête; it is said that the loa is being "baptized." So also are drums "baptized," not to mention yams, and even the hounfor itself. 177 797 823 778 782 795 851

MARRIAGE TO A LOA

Although the term *hounsi* (spirit wife, or wife of the spirit) is applied to a large class of servitors of the Vodoun temple, only a small number of servitors ever pass through rites which give them a husband-wife or wife-husband relationship with a loa. Reasons for these mystic marriages vary, but usually the rituals take place upon the prescription of a cult priest who interprets the will of the deities concerned. Most of the mystic marriages of which I have heard have taken place in the general area of Port-au-Prince and the Cul-de-Sac Plain. In some other areas of Haiti it appears that no such rites have taken place locally within the memory of the elder inhabitants. One aged man living near Belladère declared: "It [marriage to a loa] is impossible. People serve loa, they do not marry them. A man does not marry his burro. A loa 588 [794]

[8] [Herskovits, The Myth of the Negro Past, p. 233. Cf. p. 351, Category 116. --Analyst]

[9] [It is of interest to note the perseverance of traditional attitudes toward water rites in certain negro cults in the United States. River baptism often is attended by ecstatic seizures in familiar form. Cf. p. 351, Category 116. --Analyst]

171 775 754 The connection between the Haitian zombie and certain soulless beings of West Africa is quite apparent. Herskovits has observed that in Dahomey there are tales of persons thought to be dead who were found wandering in far-off places. These individuals had no memories of their former lives. "They were soulless beings, whose death was not real, but resulted from the machinations of sorcerers who make them appear as dead, and then, when buried, removed them from their graves and sold them into servitude in some far-away land."*

764 775 According to stories told by some Haitians, in ceremonies for the dead where there is suspicion that the deceased was the victim of this particular kind of poisoning a close relative stabs the body with a knife before burial to assure that it will not become a zombie. In other instances, close guard is kept over the grave for a number of days and nights, so that the body cannot be stolen.

775 787 184 Some members of the elite publicly dismiss the whole business as savage fantasy but privately say something like: "I don't believe in this sort of thing, but how can you explain the case of Marie Zombom in Cap Haitien?" And then they will tell of curious events of which they have firsthand knowledge.

538 775 787 754 There are numerous legends of persons who died and were buried, only to reappear perhaps years later in some mountain village, or in the big city of Port-au-Prince. An educated man in Port-au-Prince declared that a dead cousin of his reappeared one day in the city ten years after her burial. He tried to speak with her, but she answered only haltingly and gave no sign of recognition. After this one appearance, he said, she was never seen again. Another Haitian from the north told of a graveyard watch in his village to prevent disinterment of the grave of a young girl who had just died. The two watchers dozed fitfully, and suddenly awoke to see a man removing the girl's body. When they jumped to their feet and went after him he escaped into the shadows. But the girl staggered about, fell to the ground, and gave birth to a baby. Both the girl and her newborn child were taken to the village and given salt to eat. Both of them recovered.

One villager from the southern mountains reported that in his travels he came upon a coffee plantation on the sparsely populated mountain called Morne la Selle, and found all the laborers to be zombies. They did not sing as they worked, their movements were slow and cumbersome, and they did not sweat in the hot sun. When he asked for a drink of water, no one replied. While he stood trying to converse, the master of the plantation came with a hard leather whip and angrily ordered him to leave.

* [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, p. 243. Cf. p. 351, Category 116.--Analyst]

575 535 [292] and covered with tiny mirrors or bits of colored glass. The towering headdress of antlers or papier-mâché sculpture unavoidably recalls similar headdresses in West Africa. Each *roi* has his own style of dance, which is usually accompanied by drums. It may be a belly dance, a dance of delicate balance, or one of complicated footwork and semiacrobatics such as the imitation of a pair of scissors at work. Throughout the dancing the headdress remains majestically erect.

541 575 524 [534] In addition to the roi Lwalwali and the mâit' Rara (who is constantly in the midst of things, blowing his whistle), there are other traditional Rara personalities: the *major jonc*, who juggles with a metal baton (sometimes two or three of these jugglers work together), and the *jongleur*, a juggler or strong man who performs such feats as dancing while holding a fully set table off the ground with his teeth.

184 541 526 533 [191] On the southwest peninsula, in the region around Jérémie, there is a splurge of wrestling exhibitions during Rara days. Known as *pingé*, this festival wrestling is done with a background of excited drumming and has a striking resemblance to wrestling traditions in West Africa. Local "champions" will invade a neighboring community, sometimes traveling considerable distances to make a challenge. As in West Africa, some of these wrestlers take their own musicians with them. The musicians often are provided by the village in which the events take place. If a challenge is accepted, the spectators form a large circle, with the wrestlers in the center and the musicians to one side. There may be drums and bamboo flutes, occasionally supplemented by large earthern jars and lengths of bamboo beaten with sticks. The wrestlers are dressed only in shorts. When a man is thrown, the event is over, and another pair of wrestlers takes over. Sometimes a "champion" will take on a series of opponents until he is tired. Afterward he may move on to another community to find new competition, perhaps accompanied by a large group of friends and supporters from his own village. When the Rara season comes to an end, pingé is over for the year. It is one of the few athletic sport activities of the Haitian peasant.

541 536 [831] And now and then during Rara a *debois* is seen. The *debois* is a carved wooden marionette with a short handle below. Its arms and legs are moved by pulling a string. It is usually painted, and sometimes it is dressed. One debois observed was provided with a loose dresslike costume; when the string was pulled, a large phallus hinged into view in an erect position. This marionette was an object of endless funmaking among spectators.[2]

Another type of marionette is the "Two Kings," made of papier-mâché and operated with strings. The "Two Kings," sitting in a papier-

[2] [Footnote appears in Category 116, p. 351. --Analyst]

[P 112-II]

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57. Old wood carving of an unidentified deity, from a hounfor near Léogane. It is startlingly similar to the African carving shown in no. 58.

58. A wood carving from the Bambala tribe, western Belgian Congo. (Collection of Segy Gallery.)

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59. Carvings of more recent date, representing the loa of twins, from a hounfor in southern Haiti. Height, 12 and 14 inches.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

[P.112-QQ]

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[184] 76. *A Rara group near Plaisance. The costumes differ from those in the south.*
[171] *Note the Madras waistcloths, reminiscent of West African dress.*

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

[P.112-55]

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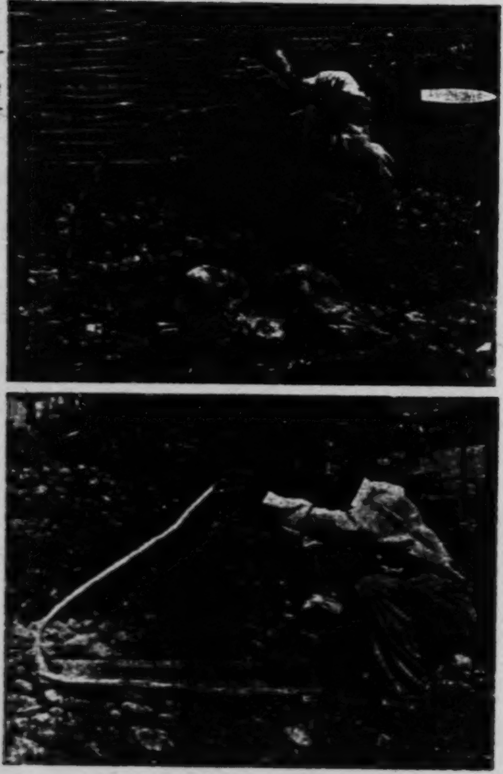

79 and 80. *Playing the tambour maringouin, or mosquito drum. Beneath the earth bow is a portable variant. The player plucks the string with one hand and with the other varies the pitch by pressure on the end of the bow.*

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81. *A miniature brass casting, an Ashanti gold weight, in the form of a spring snare used for catching small game. The device can be recognized as an antecedent of the Haitian portable mosquito drum.*

[P. 112-UU]

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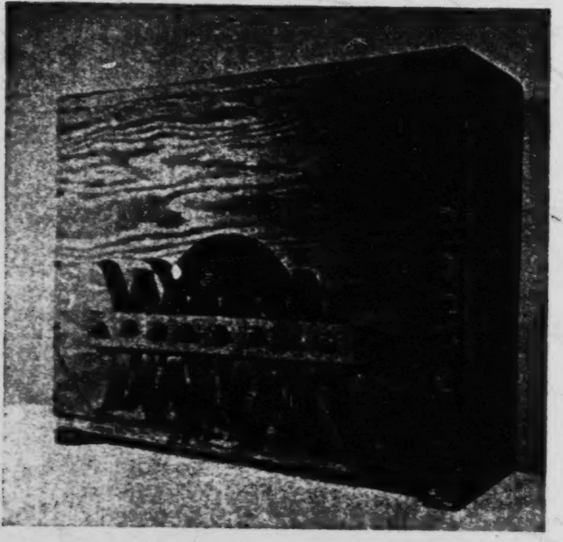

83. *Haitian marimbula with keys made of steel springs. Height of box, approximately 18 inches, width 24 inches. The player sits on the box and plays the keys with his finger tips. Compare with nos. 84 and 85.*

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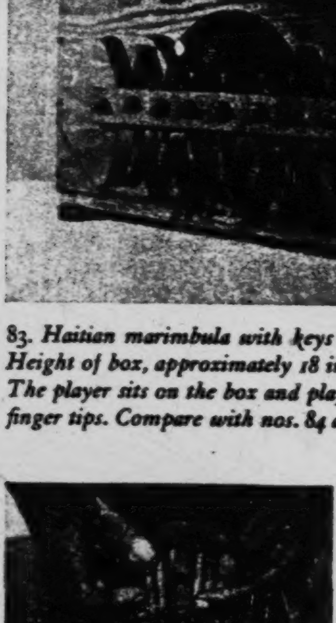
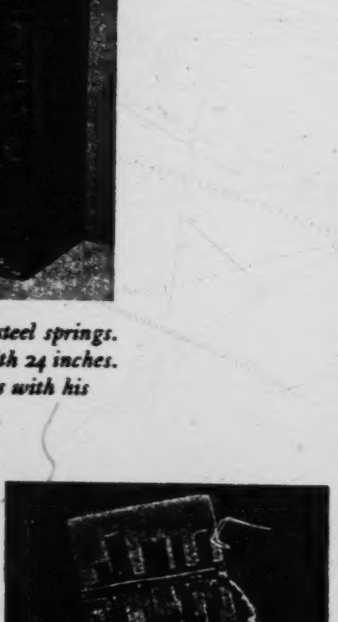


84. *A simple African sansa, or likembe, played with the thumbs. This one is from the Topoke people in the Congo.*



85. *A marimbula from Cuba, still small enough to play with the thumbs in the manner of its African prototype. The heavy steel springs are like those on the Haitian instrument.*

476 241 533 461 men who have failed to join the coumbite, or praise the host, or single out various individuals for comment. The songs of the coumbite are a newspaper of the affairs of the people. The news is personalized, editorialized, and replete with comic vignettes.[7]

476 241 461 574 At noon the drummers signal a halt, and the workers shoulder their hoes, wipe off their machetes, and adjourn to the house for food. If it is a grand coumbite, the men rest for several hours, talking, catching up on sleep, or playing cards or *mayamba.* About three o'clock they go back to the fields to work until evening. Then comes the feast, under the canopy adjoining the house. The host and his wife have killed and cooked one or more goats, depending on the size of the group. The men are served meat, rice, beans, and whatever else has been prepared. [273] Afterward, women join the party, and there is more tafia or rum. Some of the men then drift homeward, but most stay on for dancing. Zesse, Congo, or Juba drums are brought out, and the festivities begin. If another coumbite is not scheduled for the next day, the music and dancing may last well into the night.

476 562 Women, too, have coumbites to perform various kinds of large tasks, from field work to winnowing and coffee sorting, though in general the women's work groups lack the festive character of the men's gatherings.

476 241 575 There is a more tightly knit form of coumbite, known as a *société.* In southern Haiti there are the société Congo and the société Martinique; in northern Haiti there is the société Ciyé. These sociétés are clubs built around mutual work needs and recreational activities. The société Congo that appears in the town or city streets during Rara days, with bamboo or conch-shell trumpets, drums, flags, and masks, is usually composed of the men who have joined forces to till the fields. In some instances, it may also conform roughly to membership in a particular hounfor, or cult center. Unlike the ordinary coumbite, the société is not a group which meets only at ground-breaking or harvesting time; it is a permanent organization with regular, sometimes day-to-day, obligations. Week after week it moves from one man's land to another, doing the tasks that have to be done. There is no question of "Can you come?" The group goes first to one man's land, then to another's until all the work has been done. If a member of the société falls sick, so that he cannot work his own field, the société takes over his tasks for him.

476 Coumbites are held not only for agricultural work but for house-building, and sometimes for the building of a hounfor.

[171] The Haitian coöperative work group has much in common with European and American husking and barn-building parties; but it has

[7] [For footnote see Category 116, P. 352. -- Analyst]

many non-European characteristics. The manner of work, even down to 476
specific motor activity, has direct and hardly disputable West African 171 ●
connections. Instead of the short-handled West African hoe, the Haitians
use a long-handled one, and they work more erect than stooped. But the [461]
rhythmic, synchronized use of the hoe, the singing leader and the
musicians who stand to one side to "encourage" the workers, the calling
of the workers by drum *rappels*, the special consideration for the sick,
and the concept of long-term community endeavor are all of West
African beginnings. The coumbite is the legitimate descendant of the
Dahomean *dokpwe*, the *kurum* of the Mambila (Cameroons), the *ku*
of the Kpelle (Liberia), and other West African coöperative systems.

Although the *dokpwe* of Dahomey is a more formal and intricate in- 171
stitution, permeated with certain abstract and ritual concepts, its social 476
and functional characteristics are not greatly different from those of the 461
Haitian coumbite, in which coöperation is marked. Herskovits notes
that working with the Dahomean *dokpwe*

> represents recreation rather than labor to the individual member. There is song and dance to drumming and the sound of gongs, on the way and after arrival, and there is feasting and an exhibition of skill. It is an impressive sight to see from forty to a hundred men kneading earth for walls, or laying thatch, or hoeing the earth with unison movements to the accompaniment of conversation and laughter, and the songs of such of their fellows, who, for the moment at rest, have constituted themselves the chorus.

When more than one *dokpwe* is summoned for work on the same 476
project, Herskovits notes, 171

> there is great rivalry among the organizations to see which one will first complete its allotted task. If only one *dokpwe* is present, there is either individual rivalry, or the *dokpwe* may be divided into two groups which compete one against the other. The food which is provided at these times of collective labor is as rich fare as the owner can afford . . .[8]

An underlying factor in the Dahomean *dokpwe* is awareness of itself
as "the manpower of Dahomey," and the members regard themselves as
exercising their fundamental privilege as Dahomeans. This attitude to-
ward the coumbite continues to prevail in Haiti. Like the hounfor— [182]
but even more significantly in terms of routine, workaday life—the
coumbite and the société are an expression of social ties and of the
pervading interest in the common welfare.

Certain patterns of the coumbite have been carried over into non- 476
agrarian labor in the towns and cities, wherever group work is required. 178
The carrying of coffee and sugar bags in the warehouses, the loading 461
of ships, and the repairing of roads—all are traditionally performed 533

[8] [Herskovits, "Some Aspects of Dahomean Ethnology" Africa, Vol. V (July, 1932), pp. 266-296. Cf. p. 352, Category 116. --Analyst]

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476 178 rhythmically, to the accompaniment of drums, *catas*, or horns, while a
461 singing leader composes topical songs in which the laborers join.

● The tools which a rural Haitian chooses, and the way he uses them,
171 often are in a West African tradition. He performs a multitude of
412 tasks with his machete, or bush knife: weeding a garden, peeling an
orange, cutting down a tree, making a drum or mortar, opening a coconut. It is an all-purpose tool, as it is in Africa. Until a few years ago it
was supplemented by the extra-long, heavier, "double machete." The axe
and the chisel are known and used too, but the machete is supreme.
492 The hoe is the tool for tilling the soil, even in the flat country, and even
[241] though the Haitian has horses and cattle which could pull a plow.
[412] Horses are for riding and not for pulling. In carrying loads, the Haitian
peasant still prefers the head to the shoulders. If he has a donkey, the
[538] donkey will carry for him. An old Haitian proverb goes: "Meçi Bondieu
pou' bourrique là, si nous pas gainyain bourrique là faut Haitien po'té
tout bagaille" (Thank God for the donkey, if we didn't have the donkey
489 the Haitian would have to carry everything)." Generally speaking, the
491 rough and rocky terrain of Haiti and inadequate secondary roads have
493 done nothing to encourage the use of carts or wagons.

Corn is stored in the trees, as in West Africa, or in granaries built
171 [251] upon stilts, also as in West Africa. The Haitian makes his fire in the
African fashion, with several long sticks or poles meeting point-to-point
[372] in the heart of the fire. As the ends are consumed, the sticks are pushed
[252] toward the center. Grain is pulverized in large wooden mortars, as
[227] in West Africa, and winnowed in a woven tray. Fish traps are some-
[226] times woven in the traditional West African manner, and fishermen often
set their nets in converging spirals and beat the water with sticks to
[501] drive the fish to the center. And on the rivers and lakes are to be seen
dugout canoes of a kind familiar on the inland waters of West Africa.

171 The folklore of the fields contains many themes known to the West
241 African. One old Haitian farmer, discussing the spiritual relationship
of the planter to the earth, declared that a man must be strong and
potent when he plants, else the crops will be vitiated and sickly. For
[834] this reason, he said, a man must not plant seeds the day after he has
had sexual intercourse, because he has been temporarily drained of his
life-giving powers.[9]

171 The tale of the hoe that worked by itself in the fields is also wide-
538 spread. It enters many animal and Bouki stories, and also is known
in a form that is familiar in West Africa. In this story, there was once
a man who owned a hoe which worked by itself whenever a magical
formula was pronounced. It would stop working whenever the magical

[9] [For footnote, see Category 116, P 352.-- Analyst]

counterorder was given. The owner of the hoe was happy and prosperous 171
until one day a thief (in one version, the trickster Anansi) stole the hoe 538
and put it to work in his own fields. But the thief knew only the
words to command the hoe to begin, not the words to stop it. He could
not stop the hoe from working, and it worked its way out of the valley
until it came to the country of the white people.[10] The whites knew
the words to stop the hoe, and so they gained control of it. It is said by
some that the whites fashioned the hoe into a plow.

[10] [For footnote, see category 116, p. 352.--Analyst]

And when the revolution came he produced for the Haitian armies 175
knives, gun parts, and wheels to transport cannon. By the tens of thou- 178
sands he made ingeniously devised metal objects to be thrown on the 326
roads, before the French cavalry troops—objects so shaped that, no 648
matter how they fell, a single sharp point stood erect to cripple the
enemy horses. Yet knowledge of the West African uses of iron did not
altogether disappear, and during the first century of independence the
Haitian blacksmith created many old-style knives, spears, and ritual ob-
jects for the cult temple.

Even today, some of this old-style work is to be found in hounfors in 326
the southwestern peninsula. One may see simple or ornate iron standards, 778
made to support ceremonial offerings or candles, strikingly similar to 178
standards in ancestral shrines in Dahomey. There are iron bells, both [184]
single and double, made in pure West African style; ornate ritual swords [534]
and sabers which are the crests of certain deities; coiled and uncoiled [171]
iron serpents representing the gods Damballa and Ayida; and stylized [776]
or semirealistic portraits of the deities. Many of these old pieces are
nineteenth-century survivals; others have been forged within the past
decade.[2]

An over-all impression of Haitian material culture is that artistic 322
decoration is almost entirely absent and that the prime emphasis is 531
on utility. Wooden cooking spoons are efficient in form, but missing
from them is the delicate decorative carving often found in West Africa.
The long wooden washing bowl, or *gamelle*, and the wooden mortar in
which grain is pulverized are likewise clean-cut but stark and plainly
utilitarian. Clay bowls, bottles, and storage jars are usually of simple, 323
uniform design, with only accidental variations; there is little use of
glazes, and the clay is often heavy and thick. Should there be a wari 524
gameboard in the peasant hut, the chances are that it is roughly made, 322
without legs or carved designs. Dugout canoes are usually crude in ap- 501
pearance, heavy and thick-walled, and irregular in form.

Yet there are many evidences—though one must seek them out—that 531
esthetic impulses are quite alive. The gay peasant straw knapsack, or [517]
alfor, without which no mountain man makes a journey, has a charm [482]
and grace that is not diminished by familiarity and cheapness. Dec- [285]
orated with sisal braid and tassels, and colored with green and magenta [386]
dyes, each *alfor* on close inspection appears to be unique. In some com- 531
munities in the south and southwest, burlap squares also are painted 353
with these traditional dyes. About forty inches across, and made of sugar [184]
bags, these paintings swarm with geometric patterns and sometimes
with figures of flowers and animals. They are purely decorative, being

[2] [See plates 42-51, pp. 112-DD—112-FF--Analyst]

353 used for wall hangings much as appliquéd cloths are used in Dahomey.
323 Near Cap Haitien, in the north, ceramic workers make crude clay
532 figurines of roosters, pigs, dogs, cows, and people. The "purpose" of
[784] these figurines is obscure, but it is likely that they are intended for use
[778] in Vodoun ritual, a number of them having been observed in hounfors
322 in the vicinity of the town of Grande Rivière du Nord. In some mountain
[532] villages, canes carved with animal and human heads are commonly
seen. Nor is the tradition of carving gourds and calabashes, popular in
[171] various regions of West Africa, altogether forgotten. The *cayambouque*,
[531] a divided calabash with the top ingeniously cut to fit into the lower part
so as to form a sealed container, is sometimes covered with carved
geometric designs, usually crude and haphazard but on occasion metic-
[534] ulous. Until recent years the common *cha-cha*, or gourd rattle, was
similarly carved.

322 Most of the visible traditional art is to be found in the environs of
532 the cult temple. The inner walls of many hounfors are covered with
346 ritual designs and symbols and portraits of the deities. On the altar,
778 sometimes, crude wood carvings of deities are seen, along with forged iron objects, carved marassa bowls, and grotesquely shaped drumsticks known as *baguettes guinée*. All the wooden objects are characterized by a plainness that relegates them to the category of purely functional and expendable things. The wood carving of a deity is not an image, it is a representation; it can be sold or otherwise disposed of, even thrown away if infested with beetles, and another object can be used to replace it. The only concern of the cult priest in this matter is that the deity concerned should understand the situation properly and not take offense. Thus there is no strong feeling that the wood carving should be a realistic representation or that it should be "beautiful." One relatively antique wood carving, completely West African in style, was found some years ago in a hounfor near Léogane and is now in the collection of the Musée du Peuple Haitien in Port-au-Prince (see fig. 57).

788 One of the most flourishing arts of the hounfor is the *vèvè*, or rit-
532 ual drawing made on the earth in the course of a service. Most commonly these beautiful and ornate designs are made with white meal or flour, and in a few of the cults, primarily the Pétro, lampblack and
[793] red brick dust are also used. The vèvè is made by the houngan or the mambo. With sure, practiced movements, the cult priest allows the meal to trickle through his fingertips onto the ground where the rites are taking place, usually in the peristyle of the hounfor itself. The drawings he makes are composed of a multiplicity of cabalistic symbols—heart shapes, stars, interlocked V's, flags, abstract phallic forms, crosses, swords,

114 535 tion helped to perpetuate some prevailing misunderstandings and errors. This distinguished observer wrote:

> The Negroes of the Gold Coast, warlike, bloody, accustomed to human sacrifice, know only dances as ferocious as themselves, while those from the Congo, Senegalese and other African shepherds or agricultural tribes, love dancing as a relaxation, as a source of sensual pleasure. Brought from all parts of Africa to our Colonies . . . , the Negroes brought here and preserved their taste for the dance, a taste so strong that, however tired out from work the Negro may be, he always finds strength to dance and even to travel a long distance to satisfy this desire.
>
> 114 533 535 When the Negroes want to dance, they take two drums, that is, two hollow logs, of unequal length, with one end open, while the other is covered with sheepskin. These drums . . . resound under blows of the wrist and movements of the fingers of a Negro who sits astride of each drum. The larger drum is beaten slowly, the other more rapidly. This monotonous and hollow sound is accompanied by the noise of a certain number of calabashes which have been filled with [534] pebbles . . . Several *banzas*, a sort of large guitar with four strings,[2] join the concert, the tempo of which is regulated by the clapping hands of the Negro women, who form a large circle. They form a sort of chorus, which responds to one or two strident solo voices, which repeat or improvise a song.[3]

535 As for the dance movements themselves, Saint-Méry wrote:

> A male and [a] female dancer, or several dancers divided into equal numbers of each sex, jump into the center of the circle and begin to dance, always two by two. This dance, which varies little, consists of a very simple step in which one foot is put forward after the other, and then drawn back quickly, while striking the toe and the heel on the ground . . . Some turn in place, or around the woman, who turns also and changes places with her partner; that is all which one sees, except for the movement of the arms which the man raises and lowers with the elbows quite close to the body and the hands almost closed. The woman holds two ends of a handkerchief, which she waves . . . One would hardly believe how lively and animated it is, and how much grace it derives from the strictness with which the musical rhythm is followed. The dancers replace one another without respite, and the Negroes are so intoxicated with pleasure that it is necessary to force them to conclude dances of this sort, called *kalendas*.[4]

[114] [171] Saint-Méry then brings forth one of his conclusions, that this dance is obviously the development of a "comparatively uncivilized people," and that it comes from Africa, "where its characteristic features exist everywhere, even among the Hottentots."

114 535 177 [171] Here he missed the point altogether. Although many of the characteristics of this *kalenda* (or Calinda) were African, it had already been intensively hybridized with European dance concepts, such as the pairing off of males and females, who danced as couples. Then, as today, the dances which amazed and shocked the European observer were precisely the ones that had taken over certain European traditions.

[2] [Actually a banjo-like instrument of African provenience. The similarity of the word banza to banjo appears to be more than a coincidence. Cf. p. 352, Category 116. --Analyst]

[3] [Saint-Méry, De la danse, as translated by Lillian Moore in "Moreau de Saint-Méry and 'Danse'" Dance Index, October, 1946, p. 238. Cf. p. 352, Category 116. --Analyst]

[4] Moore, op. cit., p. 238. Cf. p. 352, Category 116. --Analyst]

Saint-Méry also wrote about some of the religious dances, which he 171
identified by name: 535

> In Santo Domingo, and especially in the western, French section, there has existed for a long time a kind of dance called the Vaudoux [Vodoun] . . . which is characterized by movements where the upper part of the body, the shoulders and the head seem to move convulsively. This dance is accompanied by the drums, the clapping of hands, and group singing . . .
>
> The Vaudoux is nothing compared to the Don Pedro . . . , another Negro dance, also known in the western part of Santo Domingo since 1768. Don Pedro was the name of a Negro of the Petit-Goave section, of Spanish origin, who by his daring character and certain superstitious practices, had acquired among the Negroes enough influence to be denounced by the government as the instigator of some alarming plots. The dance which bears his name consists, like the Vaudoux, in the shaking of the shoulders and the head, but this shaking is extremely violent, and to increase it still further the Negroes drink, while dancing, brandy in which they have mixed finely ground gunpowder . . .[a] They dance with the most horrible contortions, until finally they fall into a sort of epilepsy . . .[b]

Making allowances for Saint-Méry's imaginative interpretation of many 177
of the things he saw, the Haitian dance of today is not far different 178
from that of the eighteenth century. It is cast in the West African 533
mold, with Dahomean and Yoruban motifs predominating over European 535
and other Western infiltrations. As in Saint-Méry's day, the drummers (114)
sit at the edge of the dance court, a leader wielding a gourd rattle leads the singing, and the dancers and spectators constitute the chorus. The dancers usually move around the center of the court in a counterclockwise direction. Their steps and postures vary according to the type of dance being performed. The Jenvalo, for example, is danced with a bent back, hands touching the knees. In the Zépaule dance the dancers are erect, and most of the movements are made with the shoulders. In the Pétro (the Don Pedro described by Saint-Méry) there is a constant, almost agitated movement of the feet. The songs accompanying these cult dances, while presented in African style, may have hybrid or even French melodies, though in the main they are more African than European. The over-all context of the cult dances, as well as most of the secular ones, is West African, with constant interplay between the singers, dancers, and drummers. Sometime the dancers "drive" the drummers, sometimes the drummers "drive" the dancers. Certain beats of the drum are signals for special movements and postures. On hearing special beats or rolls, the dancers may leap vertically into the air, or perform a *laillé* (a swirling motion that causes the skirts to flare out), or a *djaillé* (excitement motions). Increased tension among the dancers may cause the drummers to shift the beat, or to increase

[a] [Brandy or rum with gunpowder is sometimes drunk by persons possessed by the loa Ogoun, deity of war. Cf. p. 352, Cat. 116.--Analyst]

[b] Moore, op. cit., p. 238. Cf. p. 352, Cat. 116.--Analyst]

Mousondi. In present-day Trinidad there is a Calinda dance which closely resembles the Mousondi; Puerto Rico has its Bomba Calindán; and under another name the "battle dance" survives among Negro communities in Surinam. The counterpart of the Calinda in Brazil is the Capoeira, for which musical accompaniment is provided by African-style "belly harps" (musical bows with gourd resonators) called *berimbau.* The tradition lingers on in Haiti in modern mock prize-fighting dances sometimes performed in Rara season. ooo 171 535 [178]

The stick dance (*Battonie*) of the Haitian carnival season, mentioned in chapter 8, is of more than passing interest for the reason that almost identical dances have been reported from some areas of West Africa. In the Haitian dance (see fig. 73) the baton wielders, all males, for unexplained reasons are attired in women's clothing. A photograph made in 1958 of a baton dance among the Ewe people of Togoland depicts a scene scarcely distinguishable from a Haitian Rara performance, and it is noteworthy that its all-male cast is in women's dress.[7]

In addition, there remain a number of fragments of dances of the past. In religious ritual, on rare occasions, one may see animal dances in which the performers mimic animal movements, holding in their hands long sticks to simulate front legs. This type of dance has been reported frequently in West Africa, particularly in connection with totemic rituals.

There is a dance in the Arada ritual in which the loa Legba is invoked. A hounsi—usually a man—comes onto the dance court wearing a kind of cane-crutch called the *baton* Legba, or Legba stick. The baton is about the length of a cane, with a long, grotesquely twisted "handle" that fits under the crotch of the legs. The dancer wraps one leg around the stick and walks as though he has only one foot. In the dance, he spins around on the stick, leaps, and pirouettes. Identification of the stick as well as the dance with Legba, and its position between the legs, seem clearly to relate it to the phallic sticks used in dances for Legba in Dahomey. 796 784 535 171

Among the secular exhibitionistic dances of Haiti, there is one in which a man stands on his head and goes through erotic motions to the accompaniment of drums. 535 [831]

In addition to the almost countless dances of African origin or inspiration, there is the ever-popular Meringue, a European-type social dance which is known in many forms. Haitian connoisseurs of this dance believe there are three main forms of the Meringue: the "Meringue de Concert," in which the rhythm is slow and "caressing"; the "dance Meringue," in which the rhythm is quasi-fast and very gay; and the "Meringue Coundjaille," in which the rhythm is very fast. The last [171]

[7] [United Nations Photograph no. 67065. Cf p 352, category 116. --Analyst]

535 The 1957 form[3] is heard most often during carnival days. In all variations of the Meringue, the dance is performed by couples in ballroom style. Among [831] the elite, it is restrained. Elsewhere it is much more animated, with free and uninhibited pelvic motions similar to those seen at the Saturday ● 171 night *bamboche*. Although the Haitian regards his Meringue as a national 177 popular dance, Spanish-type music has infiltrated heavily from the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and other islands of the West Indies. Thousands 53 of Haitians returning from contract labor in Cuba have brought with them not only Cuban songs and rhythms but Cuban instruments as well. It has not been a one-way affair, however, for the Arada cults of eastern Cuba have been built substantially around immigrants from Haiti, and in the Cuban mountains you may hear music and see dances of Afro-Haitian origin.

Still other kinds of dances are to be found in remote villages of Haiti—the old folk dances of Europe. The villagers still know and perform the waltz, the polka, the mazurka and the quadrille, usually to the accompaniment of violins or guitars, or possibly an accordion.

But the influences are not all ancient ones. Jazz has infiltrated the Meringue. And some years ago a small boy asked me with some concern whether I had taken proper account of a very important dance called *le black bottom*.

535 [178] Following is a list of dances known to Haitians today. Some of them are found throughout Haiti, some are known only regionally, and a few are on the verge of extinction.

DANCES CONNECTED WITH VODOUN RITUAL

Arada, or Rada: One of the main dances of the Vodoun service, named after the Dahomean city and cult center, Allada.

Anago, or Nago: Named after the Nagos, a branch of the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria. For deities of Nago origin.

Mahi: Named after the Mahi people of Dahomey.

Dérèal: A Mahi dance of northern Haiti.

Parigol: Another Mahi type of dance. Possibly from *pas réyal* (royal step).

Jenvalo, or Yenvalo: A supplication dance, variously called Jenvalo Doba (*dos bas*, low back), Jenvalo Jénou (genoux, knees), and Dobalo.

Zépaule: A supplication dance in which the movements are made primarily by the shoulders (*les épaules*). It is sometimes called Jenvalo Zépaule or Jenvalo Débout (standing Jenvalo).

Flavoredoun: Another type of shoulder dance known in the north.

Banda, or Chica: A gay and sometimes ribald dance, said to be much favored by the loa Cousin Zaka and the loa Ghédé.

Mazonne Rada: The "Masonic" Rada dance; often danced for the loa Ghédé.

Crabienne or Crabinne: A root dance, interspersed into long-drawn-out Arada

[3] [i.e., the "Meringue Coundjaille" in which the rhythm is very fast.--Analyst]

[p. 139]

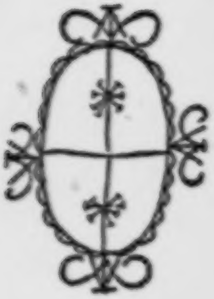
12. Songs of Complaint, Recrimination, and Gossip

The use of the song as a weapon of social criticism is an ancient and honored tradition in Haitian life. In West Africa it is common for villagers to air their complaints against, or their praise of, their neighbors, their chiefs, and the Europeans with whom they have dealings, by means of specially composed songs. Usually an ordinary offended person will not approach an official of prestige and denounce him straightforwardly. Such behavior might involve risks, or even violate social decorum. But an acceptable and effective way to make such criticism is through singing. It carries with it the sanction of propriety, custom, and good manners. The songs of criticism seek to air situations that otherwise might remain local or private affairs, and to set in motion public opinion. Thus there are songs which complain about a person's behavior, others that protest against injuries, and still others that expose an individual to ridicule. Often the themes are expressed indirectly by parable, sometimes directly. Among the Negro cultures of America the song of social criticism remains a vital and effective instrument for alleviating a sense of hurt and bringing offending persons before the bar of public opinion. It is found throughout the New World wherever Negroes have settled, from Brazil to the West Indies and the United States. In Surinam there is a formalized presentation of protest and derision songs called *lobi singi*, the function of which is to publicly embarrass and shame someone who has offended.[1/A] In the United States the song of criticism and complaint has survived strongly in the Negro work songs and blues, and has even infiltrated by this route into the popular "white" music of the country. Countless blues pieces complain of personal mistreatment by husbands, wives, and sweethearts; others, of hardships and injustice. Still others hold up the spotlight of ridicule. The subjects vary from sexual faithlessness to the rigors of prison. 533* 626 191

In Haiti this tradition has remained vital and powerful. A work gang 533* 626

[1/A] [See Herskovits and Herskovits, Suriname Folk-Lore, pp. 23-32. Cf. p. 353, Category 1K.--Author]

[P.166]



15. Secret-Society Songs

575 Secret societies were once common in Haiti, as they were in other parts of
171 the New World where West Africans settled in large numbers. The institution of the secret society was strong in various parts of West Africa from which the slaves came. The tradition was particularly notable among the tribes of Nigeria.¹ In the New World it offered to slaves and to freed Negroes an opportunity for social organization and fraternal relationships which otherwise had been pretty well shattered by the nature of slavery and the profuse admixture of cultures. A number of elderly Haitians have
[648] suggested that it was the Haitian secret societies rather than the Vodoun and Congo cults which fomented underground resistance and slave revolts against the French in the last years of the eighteenth century.

174 At this late date it is difficult to reconstruct much of the secret-society
178 picture. Such groups as may have survived until recently did so in vitiated
575 and changed form. They have been supplanted in large measure by the
[476] *société*, a kind of mutual-aid association with both economic and recreational functions. It is exclusive, but not irrevocably so, and it is not secret. The société often corresponds roughly with the membership of a hounfor, or cult temple.

575 Old people still talk about true secret societies, however. There was a
178 Moundongue secret society, separate from the Moundongue cult, whose
266 members were recruited from the survivors of the Moundongue tribe and
173 their descendants. Other secret societies were not based on tribal affiliation but were recruited from the population at large. One such group was the Vinbindingue, also known as the Blinbindingue and the Balbindingue. Its practices were feared. According to tradition, the Vinbindingue was predatory and held cannibalistic rites, as did other groups such as the Moundongue Society, the Cochon Rouge (the Red Pig Society), the Zeaubeaups, the Cochon Gris (the Gray Pig Society), and the Calinda
000 Society. How much of their reputation for cannibalism was deserved is

¹ [Herskovits, Dahomey, I, p. 256. Cf. p. 353, Category 116. -- Analyst]

[P. 170]

16. Folk Tales: Bouki, Malice, and Jean Saute

538 In the folk tales and legends of Haiti there has been a powerful assimila-
177 tion from many cultures. There are stories of European and African deri-
• 171 vation, and countless others that are to be found in one form or another
in the Middle East, Asia, and throughout the Americas. The precise origins of many of these stories probably will never be known. Some of them are as ancient as the Panchatantra and have variants in India, Indonesia, Korea, Egypt, West Africa, and northern Europe. It is likely that many tales with this broad distribution came into Haiti by way of Europe, along with the French, Spanish, and English settlers. But numerous stories told in Europe are well known in West and Central Africa too. The folk tales of the world have an astonishing universality. The adventures of the West African hare and spider are closely paralleled in the tales of the American Negro Br'er Rabbit, the hare of Thailand, and the mouse deer of Indonesia.

538 In Haiti today, as in other islands of the West Indies, there is an endless repertoire of folk stories of many kinds—animal tales; trickster tales; stories about magicians, kings, and princesses; *cantes* fables; and stories that account for the beginnings of things, the behavior of certain animals,
[177] and their physical appearance. There are European dragons and devils, and beasts of the African forests. Some of the stories are long and episodic, some are so brief—even curt—that they have lost their original core. They may point out moral or ethical values or, more commonly, strike completely amoral levels in which the humor depends upon acts that in real life would be regarded as cruel. Like the folk songs, the tales are often used to express the democratic equality of the small person with the great. In many instances it is the small man who triumphs over the powerful and rich. In the Bouki-Malice cycle it is usually the little wily trickster who wins over the larger and physically stronger opponents.

None of the Haitian tales are meant to be read, for storytelling is a dramatic art. The narrator interprets his characters as he goes along, 538 providing different voices, singing, giving humorous or tragic emphasis, and changing his facial expressions to convey the temper and mood of the protagonists. He imitates the movements and actions of the animals. In print, his broad gestures and sly intimations are all lost. The Haitian tale is a vehicle for the actor, who plays his theme according to circumstances and the responsiveness of his audience. The storyteller, like the musician, is likely to be found almost anywhere. But there are storytellers of special renown, known as *mait' contes*—who may be called upon to entertain young people at a party or Nine Night gathering. They have seemingly endless repertoires and can go on indefinitely telling tales about Bouki and Malice, or Jean Saute and Jean L'Esprit. In former times, [178] the mait' conte used an instrument such as the *bavaa* to intersperse his [533] narration with music. Old people recall that trough zithers and other in- [534] struments of African design were once employed for this purpose.

Anansi, the spider trickster-hero and buffoon of West Africa, has survived 171 in Haiti as well as elsewhere in the Antilles. In Jamaica and other British 538 islands, Anansi has become Brother Anansi, Sister Nancy, or just plain Nancy. Although he usually figures in tales dealing with other animals, he has more and more come to assume a human form, as he has in Haitian tales. But in Haiti the name Anansi is only rarely heard. Anansi's cleverness and stupidity are now attributed to two characters named Ti Malice and Nonc' Bouki, both of whom are regarded as human beings.

In West Africa the spider hero directed his mischief against the great and strong creatures of the forest, now one, now another. In Haiti, Ti Malice, who has inherited Anansi's wit and guile, pits himself mostly against Bouki, who has inherited Anansi's stubborn nature and his pompous stupidities. Ti Malice (whose first name probably comes from the Spanish *tio*, uncle) has become the slick sharpy of the city, the clever and predatory "operator," the practical joker. Like his spider prototype, Ti Malice has humor as well as cunning, though he is often remorseless. Bouki is full of self-confidence but is slow-witted and an easy prey for Ti Malice. He is thought of as a clumsy peasant of the mountains. He has a constant desire to pit himself against Ti Malice, and a capacity for involving himself in utterly fantastic situations which appeal to the Haitian sense of the ridiculous.

In many respects this team of comedians resembles another pair known in South and Central America—Tio Conejo (Uncle Rabbit) and Tio Coyote; both are pranksters, but the rabbit usually manages to outwit the coyote. Ti Malice and Bouki also figure in the universal tar-baby story, and in many other tales known in the United States in which Br'er Rabbit

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and Br'er Fox are the protagonists. Many of these tales, like the characters themselves, have West African prototypes, though others seem to have been created out of the workaday substance of Haitian life. They are not, however, essentially children's tales. Some of them involve risqué or ribald escapades.

Among the Haitian tales are numerous themes which stem directly from African lore, such as the hoe that worked by itself in the fields; the single grain of seed corn which, when drawn across the ground, grew an entire field of maize; and the pot that boiled without fire. There are many remnants also of the African tale in which a "tail feather" of an elephant is required for some magic purpose. There is a pursuit which follows the acquisition of the elephant hairs, and the pursued person saves himself with three magical eggs. When he throws one on the ground, a huge river springs up behind him. When he throws down another, a forest appears behind him, and so on.[1] The elephant's tail feather is regarded as a very powerful protective charm in many regions of West Africa. That the memory of it should continue in Haiti so precisely, although there are no elephants, is striking.

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Although Haitian folk tales are abundant and are well loved, over the years they have tended to become more and more simple. The episodic European tales of kings and princesses and monsters that have been taken over are, generally, of a naïve kind without moral or intellectual significance. They are interesting for the twists and turns of fate and for momentary laughs.

The tale of Grandmother's Bath is a case in point. In this story, Jean Saute (Stupid John) is left at home to care for Grandmother while Jean L'Esprit (Smart John) goes to market. Jean Saute puts Grandmother in a tub and pours boiling water over her, killing her instantly. He looks at the grimace on her face and concludes that she is enjoying it immensely; so he sticks her pipe in her mouth and pours more water over her. When Jean L'Esprit returns, Jean Saute is very proud of himself. But Jean L'Esprit discovers that Grandmother is dead. The brothers then pack their belongings to go to the city. There follows a series of strange and bizarre adventures. Jean L'Esprit sends his dull-witted brother back for something he has forgotten; Jean Saute misunderstands and brings the door off the house. Throughout their adventures Jean Saute carries the door with him. When they get to the forest they climb into a tree to sleep for the night, Jean Saute carrying his door along. While they are there, a convocation of devils (*djab*) takes place under the tree. Jean Saute has to urinate, and he does so into the middle of the convocation. The devils shout gleefully that it is wine from heaven and try to catch the water. Eventually the door

[1] [Footnote appear on p. 353, Category 116 --Analyst]

falls from the tree and frightens them away. The two brothers continue on their way and come to a country where it is always night—a great dragon with seven heads has swallowed the sun.[*] The two brothers kill the dragon, with the help of Jean Saute's stupidity. They cut into the monster and find a silver box, which they open, releasing the sun from captivity. The news goes on ahead. When they arrive at the city, the king, in appreciation, offers them the choice of his daughters. Jean L'Esprit, as might be expected, chooses the youngest and most beautiful. Jean Saute turns them all down and asks to marry the king's cook. 177 538

This story seems to be one of the most extended tales in Haitian lore, unless one groups all the Bouki-Malice stories together in a single cycle. However, most European-style tales (Beauty and the Beast and Jack and the Beanstalk, for instance) have suffered considerable deterioration. In the process of adaptation, such tales lost much of the original detail and decorative motif that made them interesting to the European. They became stark and brief, fragmentary anecdotes about kings, devils, and snakes.

With some few exceptions, the African stories have undergone less change: the Singing Tortoise (found later in this chapter) and Anansi's Tug of War, for example. But even in the tales of African origin there has been simplification to the extent that many of them are mere fragments; in some even the central point itself has been lost. The Bouki-Malice tales, counterparts of the Anansi stories of West Africa, have lost the contemplative tone found in the African originals. Moral points of the kind commonly made in African tales have almost entirely disappeared and are to be found only in proverbs. If the good wins over the bad, that is simply an accident of fate; for the bad wins over the good just as frequently. Death and sadism are constant themes. But the prime conflict remains the smart against the stupid, and the small and weak against the large and powerful. 177 538

Like kindred tales elsewhere in the West Indies and in the United States, many of the stories have standard beginnings and endings. The storyteller begins by saying "Cric," and his audience replies, "Crac." When he comes to the end he usually uses a variant of: 538

"I was there and saw it. And Malice gave me a kick and sent me all the way here to tell you about it." Or: "So I have run all the way here to tell it to you." Or: "That's the story, and if you don't believe me, tafia will never kill you." Or: "They gave me a blow, and I have just come to my senses." Or again: "So he kicked me over the house and here I am." These formula endings often provide a dramatic punch for the children who are listening.

[*] [Footnote appears on p. 353, Category 116—Analysis]

534 322 [412] The craft of drum making is a very skilled one, but the tools are simple: chisels, machetes, and fire. The core of the log is removed by burning and gouging, and the outside is shaped with a machete, or sometimes a hachet. The wood is selected and processed carefully. Firing of the core of the log depends a good deal on how dry the wood is, for the wood must burn slowly. It is believed that wood cut at the right stage of growth and at the right phase of the moon is resistant to the [824] ever-present powder-post beetles. Mahogany was once favored because it was durable and beetle resistant, even though it was heavy. But in recent decades mahogany has become scarce, and modern drums are made of lighter woods.

534 798 [531] [771] Drums made in the nineteenth century not only conformed to the patterns of certain West African prototypes but were also carved and decorated. Some of these old drums are still to be seen, but there are not many left. An ancient carved assotor drum (previously cited) has fortunately been preserved by the Bureau d'Ethnologie. But between the ravages of the powder-post beetles, age, and the periodic orgies of drum burning by the church and misguided public officials, most of these [648] ancient works of art have long since disappeared. During the American occupation of Haiti—from World War I to 1932—American military personnel also contributed to the mania for drum burning. And as late as 1941 there was a massive, cleric-inspired drive to wipe out these instruments as remnants of *savage* elements in Haitian life.

534 178 531 The effect of this war against the drum was only to improve the business of the professional drum maker. Drums had become expendable, hence they were made simpler. The carved decorations disappeared. Paint was substituted, and less attention was given to detail. The important thing was to produce a good functional instrument. But the creative instincts of the drum makers sometimes still take over, and many of the modern drums are beautifully proportioned, with delicate geometric patterns carved around the base, or foot. Among certain categories of drums the painted decorations consist solely of the name of the loa to whom the instruments have been dedicated—St. Jacques perhaps, or Papa Pierre, or Ezilie.

534 171 788 778 534 Drums differ in design according to the use for which they are intended. The Arada or Vodoun drums are used primarily in connection with the dances and rituals of the Vodoun cult—the cult built around the gods and rites of Arada and Yoruba theology. They resemble closely drums which are used today in Dahomey, Nigeria, and Togoland. They usually come in sets of three. The largest, the *manman* (also called *hountor* or *hountogri*), may be three to four feet high. The middle-sized drum, or *second* (also called *grondé* or *moyen*), is about two feet

[Text continues on p. 193]

high. The smallest—the *boula*, or *bébé* (sometimes called *dundun*)—is 534
about eighteen or twenty inches high. They are all called sometimes by
the Yoruba name *bata*, originally applied to a two-headed instrument.

Arada drumheads are of cowhide, held in place by hardwood pegs
set into the bodies of the drums at an angle. The drums are tuned by [171]
driving in or loosening the pegs. Even the slitting of the skins where
the pegs pass through them is African in pattern. In Cuba the drums
of the Arada (there called Arara) cult are made in precisely the same
way, though they are used in batteries of four rather than three.

In a variation of the peg type of fastening, the skin is attached to a 184
hoop, which, in turn, is held in place by ropes laced to the pegs. Each 534
drum maker has his own preference as to the angle and size of the
pegs, the proportions of the drums, and the wood from which they are
made. One drum maker near Léogane claimed to be able to identify
the region from which a drum came by examination of the pegs and
the carvings around the base.

The small Arada drum, the *boula*, is usually "whipped" with two long 534
thin sticks to provide a sharp and penetrating sound. The middle-sized 171
drum is played with one bare hand and a stick. The stick may be
straight or bowed. The bowed drumstick is known as an *agida*, the name
used for the same type of stick in Dahomey.[1] On infrequent occasions
the *moyen* drum is played with two sticks—one straight and one bowed.
The large drum, the *manman*, is played by the most accomplished of
the drummers in the orchestra. He plays with one bare hand and one
stick, which may be of various forms. It may be straight, have a hook-shaped
head, or be mallet-shaped; or it may be the grotesquely twisted
stick known as a *baguette Guinée*. All these forms are known in Dahomey
and elsewhere in West Africa.

The three Haitian Arada drums, supplemented by an African-style 171
bell known as an *ogan* and small gourd rattles (cha-chas), form the 178
standard orchestra for most dances of the Vodoun cult. The *ogan*—the 534
forged iron bell with an external striker—has all but disappeared in 796
recent years, along with the institution of the village forge. In its place
one may see any kind of metallic object, such as a hoe blade, a link of
chain, or a length of pipe, all of which are referred to by the old name
ogan. In Cuba the Arada cult preserves the bell, both in single and
double form, under the same name. The word *ogan* probably derives
from the Yoruba term for this instrument, *eguaran*.

Playing in concert, the three Arada drums produce a range of tones, 533
and the player of the *manman*—the chief of orchestra—adds to the 534
effect by frequently striking his stick against the side of the drum above

[1] [Herskovits and Herskovits, *Suriname Folk-Lore*, p. 19. The stick is also known in Suriname. Cf. p. 353, Category 116. --Analyst]

534 533 the pegs. High notes are achieved by striking the drumhead near the rim, and low notes near the center.

534 516 The drummers usually sit together on a bench or in chairs at one side of the dance court. The larger and middle drums are slightly tipped to keep their "mouths" open; the *bula* stands squarely on its base and is therefore somewhat muted. The player of the *manman* often drums in a standing position, bracing the instrument by means of a cord around his thigh.

534 796 Another drum associated with the Arada rites is the assotor. This drum is usually about six feet high, and may be from two to two and a half feet in diameter. It is played in an upright position, and two or three small "windows" near the base permit the sound to emerge. [794) This big drum is used only for the Assotor service, at which the Dahomey "nation" plays host to the loa of all the various rites. Usually there is only a single drummer, who plays while standing on a bench or raised platform; but on occasion, two or even three drummers play simultaneously on the single drumhead.

534 171 It is interesting to note in passing that most of the Vodoun drums have Dahomean names and are of Dahomean design, despite the fact that Yoruban religious motifs have survived. The Yoruban double-headed *bata* drum, used in Nigeria for invocation of the principal deities, appears to have survived in decadent form on the island of La Gonave, where it is known as *pongwé*. Curiously, it is played not like the Yoruban *bata* (one hand on each head) but like another Yoruban instrument, 534 the *dundun*, or pressure drum. The instrument is held under one arm and played only on the forward head. Significantly enough, this drum [794] is said to be used only for Nago (Yoruba) rites. Another drum reserved for Nago services is found in the region of Léogane. It resembles the [796] Arada drum in every respect except that it stands on three carved legs.

Drums associated with the services of the Congo "nation" are distinctly different from those found in Vodoun ritual. No drumsticks are used, and the heads are of goatskin rather than cowhide and are held in place by a system of cords and hoops. The Congo drum seen today stands about three feet high; old people say that within their memory there was a variety of Congo drum as tall as a man. Unlike the Arada [531) drum, the Congo drum usually has no carved or painted decoration. For the "pure" Congo rites, two of these instruments, accompanied by gourd or metal rattles of various kinds, constitutes an orchestra. One typically Congo rattling device, called *mayoyo*, consists of three large gourds containing pebbles, on the top of a long pole.

A variant of the Congo drum is used for Pétro rites. It is similar

534 [177] the Haitian word for "twins." They are used primarily for secular music of the Cuban type, and may in fact be an importation from Cuba. The marassa is one of the few drums on which a finger technique is used; that is, striking with individual fingers rather than with grouped fingers. Marassas are often played in concert with guitars and marimbas.

[314] [237] The *basse* is the shallow finger drum resembling what in the United States is called the tambourine. Constructed in the pattern of an African prototype, its head is usually fifteen or eighteen inches in diameter and made of goatskin. Small metal disks sometimes are inserted in the frame to act as rattles. The head is kept well coated with resin or beeswax and is tapped and rubbed with the fingers. The *basse* is used only for secular music, except in the rare instances when it is used in Congo services. Some Haitians believe that the name of the instrument comes from the word *Basque*.

534 202 It is reported that signal drums were still in use a decade ago in remote sections of the southwestern peninsula. One of these instruments, according to description, is distinguished mainly by its large belly and small mouth; like the Juba drum, it is played on its side. Another style of signal drum has a slit in the side and is played erect, much like an African slit-log drum standing on end.

534 [171] Another percussion instrument is the bamboo stamping tube, called the *ganbo* or *ti kanmbo*. It is African in origin and probably takes its name from the Loango term for the same device, *dikanmbo*.[1] The stamping tube is simply a length of bamboo, open at one end and closed at the other by a natural joint membrane. The closed end is struck sharply upon the ground, and the tone comes from the open top. The device works like an inverted drum, the closed end functioning like a drumhead. A battery of four or five ganbos may provide the percussion music otherwise played by drums. The musician corresponding to the *bulatier* of the drum orchestra plays two small stamping tubes, one in each hand. The other musicians have one each, thicker and longer than the bulatier's and producing deeper tones. Cupped hands are manipulated over the open ends for varying the sounds. [171] This instrument has survived in various parts of the New World where Africans were settled, particularly other West Indian islands, Brazil, and Venezuela. In Venezuela the stamping tubes are called *quitiplas*.[2] They have recently been reported from various areas of West Africa, including French Equatorial Africa.[3]

534 248 778 The ganbos had a singular burst of popularity in Haiti during the United States military occupation of the country after the first World War, when drums were often seized and destroyed. Drums could not

[115] [1] [Informant: Joseph Lengo, Brazzaville. Cf P 354, Category 116. --Analyst]

[2] [Library of Congress album, Folk Music of Venezuela. Cf P 354 Category 116. --Analyst]

[3] [Pamphlet accompanying recording Music of Equatorial Africa (New York: Ethnic Folkways Library, 1950). Cf P 354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

easily be hidden, but the ganbos were simply slipped into the straw 534
roofs and thus put out of sight. Moreover, by some strange process of 648
reasoning, military authorities regarded the bamboos as "harmless," 798
though they were used for the same purposes as the contraband drums.

There are numerous other kinds of simple percussion devices. One 534
such instrument, now less commonly seen than previously, is a length
of open bamboo laid in the crotches of two Y-shaped sticks set in the
ground. Like other *catas,* the bamboo is beaten with two sticks. Some
Haitians believe that in former days such bamboos were played in batteries like a xylophone.

Sometimes a light-weight wooden cylinder, or perhaps a drum denuded [461]
of its playing head, is carried by the timekeeper of a coumbite. [476]
It, also, is played on the side with sticks.

Wooden mortars for pulverizing grain take on the character of musical 534
instruments when used in combination with voices. When two or more 533
mortars are used, with two men or women wielding the long polelike 412
pestles in each mortar, the rhythmic effects can become fairly complicated.

The *claves* or *palos* (small hardwood sticks) are used primarily in 534
connection with secular dances of a Cuban type, or to accompany such 535
instruments as the guitar and the marimba. One stick is held loosely in [177]
the natural fold of the hand, so that it is free to vibrate, and is struck
sharply with the second stick. The tone is almost metallic because of [824]
the hardness of the wood, usually lignum vitae. The name of the instrument
is recognizable as a form of *clavar,* or *clavo,* Spanish for "peg"
or "nail." It is thought that wooden shipbuilding pegs provided the [171] ●
name for this device, which has equivalents in West Africa.

Among the folk instruments there are various kinds of horns and 534
trumpets. Cows' horns are played musically in some parts of the southern 184
peninsula, though usually they are used as ritual instruments and signaling
devices. Wooden trumpets called *pistons* are carved from the stems [824]
of the papaya tree. Conch-shell trumpets, known as *lambis,* are commonly [202]
used as signaling devices by fishermen. They are also to be
found among the coumbites, in Rara festivities, and occasionally in
rituals, where they are usually identified with sea deities. In carnival [541]
times the old fashioned phonograph horn makes its appearance as a combined [216]
trumpet and voice amplifier.

Probably the most important of the trumpets is the one made of 534
bamboo. It is called a *vaccine*[a] or *bois bourrique.* Both names have in- 755
teresting origins. The cow's horn was at one time used for magico- [237]
medical purposes. The leaf doctor used it as an "applicator" of powders
and potions. A small opening was made in the point of the horn, and

[a] [See plate 8, P. 112-F. --Analyst]

534 the horn itself was filled with the magico-medical preparation, which
755 was called *vaccine*. The point of the horn was applied to parts of the body
which needed treatment, and the powers of the potion were thus transmitted to the affected areas. In time, the cow's horn itself came to be
known as a *vaccine*. Eventually the horn used for musical purposes took
over the name, which was then transferred to the bamboo trumpet. The
other name by which the bamboo trumpet is known, *bois bourrique*,
means burro wood. But it probably is a corruption of *voix bourrique*,
meaning "donkey's voice," an accurate description of the sound it makes.

534 The vaccine consists of a length of bamboo, with a joint membrane at
533 one end cut into a mouthpiece. Trumpets of different sizes give different
tones, and three to five of them together constitute a vaccine orchestra.
Vaccines are employed by the coumbites in the fields, and they are heard
in the towns and cities primarily during the pre-Easter festivities. In
the Rara festivals the vaccine players march together, blowing and
tapping their trumpets with sticks, followed by a crowd of dancers. Traditionally, the bamboo trumpet is not employed in religious music,
although in recent years it has made its appearance occasionally in Congo-Guinée rites.

534 There are two kinds of musical scrapers. The one more often seen
is the *grage*, a piece of sheet metal perforated in the fashion of our
common kitchen grater. It is "played" by scraping a piece of wire or
a nail across its rough surface. Found in secular rather than religious
settings, the grage is likely to be used in combination with such instruments as the *tambourine*, marimba, claves, and basse. The second form
of scraper is the *dentlé*, or *dentli*, a notched stick played with a bamboo
scraping blade. The free end of the stick is sometimes braced against
a bench or a plank, which acts as a sounding board. Some Haitians
reported that in the old days gourds were used as sounding chambers.
534 The scraper in one form or another appears to have both Indian and
171 West African precedents. Its relationship to the washboard as used in
Negro folk music in the United States is obvious. The notched gourd
[177] called the *guiro*, found in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other West Indian
islands, appears to be present in Haiti only as an imported instrument.

534 Rattles of various types are used in religious and secular dances, in
535 the invocation of deities, and as accompaniment for solo singing. The
most common of the rattles is the simple cha-cha, or *kwa-kwa*. It is
a small gourd with a wooden handle, with seeds inside. It is usually
played by the singing leader as a device to keep time. Sometimes the long
dry seed pods of the cha-cha tree are used as a substitute.

008 In the Rara season two special rattles are used. One of them is made

In the Rara season two special rattles are used. One of them is made of metal and resembles a tin can with a wooden handle. The metal [534
sometimes is perforated with numerous small holes, and inside are [541
hoholi seeds, which act as rattlers. This instrument, known as a *tchancy*, [824]
is usually decorated with colorful ribbons when in use. (In northern [531)
Haiti the term *tchancy* is used to designate metal wrist rattles worn by drummers.) The other Rara rattle, called *jonconjon* or *joncjon*, is made of three gourds carried on a long pole. One of the gourds is affixed to the end of the pole, and the others are fastened to the terminals of a short crossbar, giving the effect of a cross with bulbous ends. Since many of the Rara processions are dramatizations of the Christ epic, the instrument could be interpreted as a Christian symbol, though its conversion into a noisemaker appears to be an African conception. The [171]
jonconjon may be a variant of the small rattle-cross which is used by the Abakwa secret society in Cuba.[8]

The sacred gourd rattle of the cult priest is called *ason* or *bakson*. [534
It is pear-shaped and covered with a network of beads which act as 778
external strikers. It is used by the houngan to summon the spirits of 171
the dead, to praise or call upon the deities, and to accompany the per- 778]
formance of magic. The ason is of West African derivation, and its counterparts are to be found among the cults of Martinique, Trinidad, Cuba, Brazil, Venezuela, and elsewhere where African traditions have left their mark. The gourds from which the asons are made are grown in a special grove sacred to the loa.

A large calabash rattle has been reported from several isolated regions [534
of Haiti, primarily from the north. Some rattles of this kind have been [184)
described as more than twenty inches in height and covered by a network of external strikers, usually wari beans. The calabash rattles are used in groups of three. They are shaken and thumped against the palm of the hand, producing both deep and high-pitched sounds. These oversize rattles are employed without drums and are said to be as- [171)
sociated with Arada-Nago rites. They appear to be a survival of the instrument known among the Yoruba as the *shekere* and are found in Cuba in both Dahomey and Lucumi (Yoruba) cult centers.

Probably one of the oldest of Haitian folk instruments is the earth bow, known as the *tambour maringouin*, or mosquito drum. Traditionally the mosquito drum is made in the following way:

A hole is dug in the earth, perhaps a foot or more deep. It is covered with palm or banana bark, which is pegged firmly all around. A cord is attached to the center of the bark membrane and drawn taut to a bent green sapling, one end of which is buried in the ground at a slight angle. The cord is plucked and snapped with the fingers of one hand, while

[8] [See Courlander "Musical Instruments of Cuba," Musical Quarterly April, 1942, pp. 233-2[illegible]. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. -- Analyst)

534 its tension is varied by pressure on the bowed stick with the other hand, producing a change of pitch. The covered hole acts as a sound chamber.

In a "portable" model of the mosquito drum a tin pail or can is used for a sounding chamber. The pail is inverted and fastened to a small plank, to which the sapling also is affixed. It is believed by some observers that the instrument has special significance during the pre-Easter [541] holidays (Mardi Gras and Rara),[1] but it may be used at almost any time of the year. The "accompaniment" for the mosquito drum usually consists of some kind of *cata*—sticks beaten upon a board or on the drumhead itself. On occasion, two or three of these instruments are beaten together, and the rough bark membrane may be rasped for additional effects. Most of the songs that go with the mosquito drum are [533] [539] secular. One of the appropriate songs favored by children goes:

Maringouin dit moin ta zwing oh!
Maringouin dit moin ta zwing!
Ta zwing oh!
Ta zwing! [Ex. 166]

Mosquito says I will zwing, oh!
Mosquito says I will zwing!
Will zwing, oh!
Will zwing! *

534 171 The earth bow has a clear African ancestry. In almost identical form it has been found in the French Sudan, among the Washambala of East Africa, the Bongos in the eastern Congo, the Bafia and Baya in the Cameroons, the Fulbe in the Sahara region, and the Futadjallon people in Nigeria.[2]

The German explorer Georg Schweinfurth might have been describing a Haitian scene when he wrote, some eighty-five years ago, of the Bongos:

> Performers may be seen sitting for an hour together with an instrument of this sort: They stick one end of the bow into the ground, and fasten the string over a cavity covered with bark, which opens into an aperture for the escape of the sound. They pass one hand from one part of the bow to another, and with the other they play upon the string with the bamboo twig and produce a variety of humming airs which are really rather pretty. This is a common pastime with the lads who are put in charge of the goats. I have seen them apply themselves very earnestly and with obvious interest to their musical practice, and the ingenious use to which they apply the secrets of the theory of sound.[3]

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* The hum of the mosquito as it strikes.

[1] [Comhaire Sylvain, Les Contes haitiens, pp. 97-98. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. -- Analyst]

[2] [Curt Sachs, Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente (Berlin, 1929), pp. 60-61. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]

[3] [Schweinfurth, The Heart of Africa, I, 287. Cf. p. 354 Category 116. -- Analyst]

Except for the "aperture for the escape of the sound," the Bongo instrument is identical with the Haitian earth bow. The resemblance of the instrument to a spring snare strongly suggests that it may have been developed from some such device for catching game. This possibility is strengthened by the use of the earth bow among certain of the Bambarra hunters of the French Sudan as a game lure, the music played upon it being thought to have magical properties to attract animals to the region of the hunt.[9] A "portable" type of spring snare used among the Ashanti of Ghana is strikingly similar in form to the Haitian "portable" earth bow (see fig. 80).[8a] 534 171 174

This instrument has survived not only in Haiti but in the United States as well. The washtub device that is an important part of American Negro folk music is a clear development of the earth bow. The washtub is inverted and a cord is attached to the tin bottom. The other end of the cord is fastened to a stick which is braced against the lip of the bottom side of the tub. The stick and the cord are manipulated precisely like the Haitian and African instruments. There is implicit evidence that the role of the washtub has been taken over in modern jazz orchestras by the double-bass fiddle. 534 171

Another device of African provenience is the Haitian *marimba* (also called *malimba*, *manimba*, and *marimbula*). It consists of a wooden box upon which a series of metal strips is mounted in such a way that they may be plucked with the fingers. In the face of the box, directly behind the keys, there is an aperture to permit the escape of the sound. The number of keys varies from three to seven or more, though some of them may produce duplicate tones. The instrument is usually about the size of a soap box. The musician sits upon it, facing the same way as the keyboard, and plays with his hands between his knees. The marimba is used for carnival music and for dances of the secular types, frequently in combination with a guitar, claves, and a cha-cha. It is a West Indian development of the small African *m'bila* or *sansa*, or "thumb piano." Several examples of the smaller instruments played with the thumbs have been found elsewhere in the West Indies, notably in Cuba,[11] and large forms of the sansa have been reported in recent years in Africa.

Among the instruments more or less restricted to religious service are whistles and small hand bells, which are used for invoking and saluting the loa and the dead. *Canaries* (large clay water vessels) also enter into ritual use. They are sung into, tapped with sticks, and on some occasions are covered with goatskin heads and played like a drum. 534 776

8a [Fig 80 appears on p. 112-55. --Analyst]
9 [Informant: Sobikas Tore, Bamako. Cf. p. 354, [115]
10 Category 116 --Analyst]
11 [See Courlander, op. cit., p. 239. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

776 184 794 a "nation" in the Dahomé rites; and the Ibo group, though still distinct, is frequently allied with the Dahomé rites or the Guinée rites.

The following list does not pretend to include all the loa known in Haiti. It is doubtful that a complete list could ever be compiled, in view of the continual generation of new deities and the constant cross-fertilization between "nations." The loa are grouped here according to most widespread usage. [128] There are contradictions from which there is no possible escape, and these general groupings will not necessarily correspond to the concepts and practices of any specific locality. It is intended here to give a broad and generalized view.

128 776 794 Under "The Vodoun Pantheon" I have placed constellations of deities of Dahomean and Yoruban origin, along with others that are clearly identified with Vodoun rites. Under "The Congo and Pétro Pantheons" I have listed the Congo-Guinée loa—consisting mainly of deities associated with Central Africa and deities affiliated with the Pétro rites. Ibo and Kanga loa are grouped together, because in many regions of Haiti the two pantheons appear to be interlocked. A separate listing is given for the Simbi family of water deities in view of their ambivalence; they are sometimes found in the Pétro group and sometimes in the Dahomé, according to local practice.

THE VODOUN PANTHEON

776 171 DAMBALLA WÉDO, or DAN WÉDO. One of the most venerable of Haitian loa. He is generally recognized as the husband of Ayida Wédo, though occasionally the two deities are merged in a personality called Damballa-Ayida. The concept of a single identity for Damballa and Ayida conforms to Dahomean belief. In both Haiti and West Africa, Damballa is identified with the rainbow and is symbolized as a snake.[1] In Haiti he is associated also with rainfall, springs, and fertility. [782] [784] [177] He is sometimes described as "white," and the proper food offering to him is a white chicken. Persons possessed by Damballa usually take on stylized characteristics of snakes. Along with many other important loa, he has become identified with characters in Christian religious belief. There are, in fact, "two" Damballa Wédos. One, identified with Moses, comes in talking; the other, identified with St. Patrick, never talks. [782] Food offerings for the St. Patrick version of Damballa consist of eggs, flour, sugar, and almond syrup. Damballa remains one of the chief gods of the Dahomey cult in Cuba, and he survived into the last century in New Orleans under the name Danny.

[822] AYIDA WÉDO. Generally regarded in Haiti as the wife of Damballa, Ayida is also symbolized by snake and rainbow, and her color, like Damballa's, is "white." In Dahomey and Nigeria, Ayida is known as a male rather than a female spirit and is regarded there as the same divinity as Damballa, or Dã. In Dahomey, Ayida Wédo was the great serpent who held up the world. According to one myth, the Creator of the World assigned to Ayida the task of holding up the earth to keep it from falling into the sea. The great serpent coiled himself, tail in mouth, and lay below

[1] [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 245 ff. Cf. p.354, Category 46.--Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

the earth like the carrying pad that women wear to support bundles on their heads. 776
Whenever Ayida Wèdo shifted his position there were earthquakes.[1] When the rain- [171]
bow appeared after a rain it was said that Ayida had come out from under the [821]
earth to drink of the fresh water.

DAMBALLA GRAND CHEMIN (Damballa of the Highway). Another manifestation [484]
of Damballa as a protector of those on long journeys.

DAMBALLA VEDRE. Another manifestation of Damballa.

DABOSI WEDO. Considered to be the daughter of Damballa. The ending of her name (-si) suggests that at one time she may have been considered a wife rather than a daughter.

DOSU WEDO. A member of Damballa's family.

AIDO WEDO. A member of Damballa's family. Said to be a "work loa" who aids [241]
men with their gardens, especially in time of illness.

ÈZILIE DOBA, or DOBAS, sometimes spelled ERZULIE. One of the "big" loa of the [177]
Dahomé pantheon, a symbol of purity, and sometimes identified with the Virgin
Mary. Her color is white, and services to her include a ritual sweeping and sprin- [822]
kling of the earth and a perfuming of the air. Food offerings to her include corn [782]
meal and eggs. Male "horses" of Èzilie are sometimes bound to her by mystic [787]
marriages, and they are obligated to refrain from sexual intercourse on certain [834]
days which belong to her. There are a number of Èzilies, regarded as members of [588]
the same family or, in some cult centers, as different manifestations of the same deity. Some Haitians regard Èzilie Doba as the ancestor of the Èzilie family and refer to her as Grand Èzilie. Note that there is a Dahomean town named Dogba at approximately 0° 6′ E., 6° 50′ N.

ÈZILIE FRÉDA, or ÈZILIE DAOMESSE (Dahomé), or ÈZILIE FRÉDA DAHOMESSE. Like [177]
Èzilie Doba, she is a symbol of purity and is identified with the Virgin Mary. [588]
Mystic marriages are performed with her, and her "horses" are obligated to re- [787]
frain from sexual intercourse on certain days. She is also a giver of wealth. [834]

ÈZILIE WEDO. A sister or daughter of Èzilie Doba and also related to Damballa.

ÈZILIE MAPIANGUE. A sister of Èzilie Fréda.

ÈZILIE BANDA. A manifestation of Èzilie who is especially fond of the Banda dance.

ÈZILIE JÉROUGE (Red Eyes). A stern and hard Èzilie who is often identified with Pétro rather than Dahomé rites.

AIZAN FRÉDA. A member of the Èzilie family, regarded as a market-place protector. [443]
In Dahomey, Aizan was a protector of all public gathering places.[2] [171]

AIZAN BADADRÉ

AIZAN DAHOMÉ BADA BOSU

MÈTRESSE MAMBO. A special form of Èzilie as priestess.

MÈTRESSE ESPAGNOLE, or PAGNOLE. A person mounted by this Èzilie talks only [787]
Spanish. [191]

SOBO, or SOGBO. A thunder deity who hurls stones to the earth when angered. 776
Some of the stones thrown by Sobo are regarded as the sacred residence of various 171
loa. Sobo (or Sogbo) is a member of the original Thunder pantheon of Dahomey.

SOBO BADÉ, or SOGBO BADÉ, or simply BADÉ. A close relative of Sobo, regarded as the protector of the boundary (badé). In Dahomey, Badé is sometimes referred to as the son of the deity Sobo.[3]

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[1] [See Ellis, The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa, pp 47-49; and Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 245ff. Cf. p 354 Category 116. --Analyst]

[2] [Ellis, op. cit., p 52. Cf. p 354, Category 116. --Analyst]

[3] [Herskovits, op cit., pp 152ff. Cf. p 354, Cat 116. --Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776 Agomé Tonnerre, also pronounced Agomé Tonnè. Another thunder loa. Agomé (or Agbomé) is the name of an ancient capital of Dahomey.

Badia. The wife of Sobo Badé.

[171] So Nanchon, also called Sogo Nanchon, or simply So. A thunder loa of Dahomean origin. In Dahomey he is regarded as an offspring of Mawu and Lisa, and a member of the Sky pantheon.

[171] [966] Kébiessou, or Kébiosou. A thunder loa who, like Sobo, hurls stones to the earth. In Dahomey he is known as Xevioso and is thought to be the same deity as So. In Haiti, persons killed by lightning are thought to be enemies of Kébiosou and are given special treatment in burial.

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776 782 [821] [822] Agwé Woyo, known also as Coquille-Nan-Mer. He is a loa of the sea; thunder and lightning over the ocean are thought to be Agwé shooting his cannon. He is usually symbolized in pictures by a sailing or steam vessel. His colors are blue and white, and the primary sacrificial animal for him is a male goat. High ceremonies for Agwé are begun in the hounfor and consummated in a sailing boat on the open sea, from which is launched a highly decorated and stylized miniature ship containing food for the deity. This tiny craft is known as the *barque d'Agwé*. Hounfors honoring this spirit usually have a small boat hanging from the rafters. In Dahomey, [771] Agwé is also a sea deity and a member of the Thunder pantheon.

776 [771] Agwétta Woyo. She is thought to be Agwé Woyo's wife, though in Dahomey she was considered to be his daughter.

Agwélou Wanadou. Said to be the son of Agwé

La Sirène. Another deity of the sea, a loa commonly visualized as a mermaid. La Sirène is usually thought of as belonging to a separate family, though she is frequently served along with Agwé. Some societies do not recognize her at all.

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776 171 Nananbouclou, or Nanan Bouclou. A loa of herbs and medicines. In Dahomey this spirit was considered the grandparent of all deities, the progenitor of Mawu and Lisa from whom all demigods are descended.§ She is still remembered in the Dahomey cults of Cuba.

Lisa or Lissa. Probably the Lisa of Dahomey child of Nananbouclou.

Attibon Legba, or Legba Si. One of the most important of Haitian loa, frequently the first one invoked in any service. He is the guardian of the gateway, the [782] crossroads, and the highway. Cocks and male goats are his favorite foods, as in West Africa. In Dahomean tradition, Legba is the youngest offspring of Mawu and Lisa, the progenitors of all Dahomean deities. He is a divine trickster who is both feared [778] and loved, a force that is capriciously malevolent or benevolent. Today, as in earlier times in Dahomey, the image of Legba, made of clay, stands or sits before the entrance to many villages. Sometimes the image is nothing more than a mound or column of earth symbolizing a phallus. Legba's mischief and tricks are directed against the other deities and human beings. In Haiti, as in Dahomey, Legba is not a personal deity. As Herskovits points out, Legba has no "character" and cannot be [989] relied on. He is the intervener between mankind and the deities. It is in this sense that he "opens the gate," providing a channel of communication between man and loa; and it is for this reason that he is often supplicated first in religious ritual. In Dahomean lore, Legba's mischief is often in the realm of sex. In ritual dances for

§ [Ibid, pp. 101 ff. Cf. p. 354 Category 116 --Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776
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[331]

Legba in Dahomey, the performers hold a carved phallus between their legs and perform copulating movements. The Haitian Legba is depicted as an aged limping loa, and the carved phallus has become a grotesque crutch-cane that fits into the crotch of the legs. The Dahomean Legba is remembered elsewhere in the New World, notably in Dutch Guiana, Brazil, and Cuba. Until relatively recent times he was known among the Negroes of Louisiana by the name Papa Lebat.[5]

Legba Grand Chemin (Legba of the Highway). A special manifestation of Legba who guards the highway.

Legba Kalfu (Legba of the Crossroads). A special manifestation of Legba who guards the crossroads.

Legba Mait' Bitation (Legba Master of the Household). The Legba who protects the house and its grounds.

Legba [illegible]. One of the Legba family.

Legba Kévi. One of the Legba family.

Legba Attibon. Said to be a "Nago" deity.

Attibon Kéké. One of the Legba family.

Attibon [illegible]. One of the Legba family.

Attibolo Kal. One of the Legba family.

Ogoun Feraille, often referred to as Mait' Ogoun. The chief and ancestor of a large family of loa whose activities have to do with blacksmithing and war, which are closely related. Ogoun Feraille is a patron of warriors and the forge; his symbol is a piece of forged iron, such as a machete, a hoe blade, a saber, or a piece of iron chain. In West Africa, Ogoun is considered a patron of hunters as well.[6] He was widely known by various peoples in Dahomey and Nigeria. In Dahomey he was considered a child of the divine Mawu and Lisa,[7] and among the Yoruba of Nigeria he was regarded as a brother of Chango and Dada,[8] two spirits who survive in the Haitian pantheon. An altar to Ogoun Feraille, like that of the loa Chango, may consist of a pile of iron scrap, perhaps a broken sugar vat. In Cuba, Ogoun Feraille is a prominent deity in both the Arara (Dahomey) and the Lucumi (Yoruba) cults. Although absorbed exclusively into the Dahomé family of rites in Haiti, Ogoun Feraille and his entire family and escorte are designated as belonging to the Nago "nation." Their color, like that of heated iron, is red. Ogoun Feraille survived until recent times in Louisiana as Joe Feraille.[9] (322) 776

Ogoun Fer (Ogoun Iron). He is sometimes called Ogoun St. Jacques, St. Jacques Majeur, or simply St. Jacques, being identified with the saint of that name.

Ogoun [illegible] (Ogoun Blacksmith).

Ogoun Batala. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Baltana Manin. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Jiscou, or Jiscou. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Ogoun Badagry, or Batagri. Said to be a "grandson" of Mait' Ogoun. He is a "work" loa, as well as an ironworker and a warrior, and helps in the fields, especially in time of sickness. Badagry is the name of a town near the mouth of the Ogoun River in western Nigeria. According to a priest of the Cuban Dahomé cult, the word *badagri* was used to designate the circumcision house in Dahomey. Ogoun Badagry thus may have been associated with that shrine. 776 171

Chango, or Ogoun Chango. A member of the Ogoun family and, like most of his brothers, a warrior and ironworker. Chango's altar is usually a pile of scrap iron, or

[5] [Ibid., pp. 201ff. Cf. p 354 Category 116. -- Analyst]

[6] [Ellis, The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa, p 69. Cf. p. 354 (Category 116. --Analyst)]

[7] [Herskovits, op cit., pp. 105ff. Cf. p 354 Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[8] [Ellis, The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples, pp. 45, 60ff. Cf p 354 Cat 116. --Analyst]

[9] [Library of Congress Recording, No. 101. Cf p 354 (Cat 116. --Analyst)]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776 any iron object, such as a sugar vat. In West Africa, Chango (or Shango) and Ogoun
171 were considered separate deities. In Nigeria, according to Ellis, they were brothers, closely associated with each other. Among the Yoruba, Chango was a thunder-and-lightning god and he is believed to have been one of the early kings of Oyo. The African Chango, like the Haitian, is identified with fire, a corollary of lightning, and persons possessed by him may carry pots of fire on their heads and perform other fire tests.[12 A]

Chango Géné. Another manifestation of Ogoun Chango.

Ogoun Bachango. Possibly the same as Ogoun Chango, or he may be named after the Bachangos, a Congo tribe. A warrior and ironworker.

Ogoun Balindjo. One of the Ogoun family.

Nago Nago. One of the Ogoun family.

Armoand, Armand, Chaud, or Creol. One of the Ogoun escorte, sometimes called Ogoun Creol, or Creol Bossa.

Ogoun Yamson. One of the Ogoun brothers.

Obatala, or Batala. A loa of war. Among the Yoruba people of Nigeria, Obatala was a sky deity and protector of the town gates. He was thought to form children in the womb and was therefore believed responsible for albinism and congenital deformities.[13 A] Obatala and Chango are among the main Lucumí (Yoruba) deities in Cuba.

Ogoun Badé. An aspect of Ogoun who functions as a gateway guardian.

Ogoun Blanc (White Ogoun). He does not drink rum, which is a favorite beverage of his brothers.

Ogoun Jama

Ogoun Jekka, Jikki, or Yikki. A warrior and ironworker. Jikki may have been a shrine or regional designation.

Ogoun Kilola

Ogoun Kénson

Yalodé, or Ogoun Lodé. Brother of Ogoun Badagry and the other Ogouns. Yalodé is clearly of Dahomean origin.[14 A]

Ogoun Panama, or Ogoun Palama. Guardian against sunstroke, or spirit responsible for sunstroke. A brother of Ogoun Badagry. He is usually seen wearing a Panama hat.

Ogoun Pierre Nouvou

Ogoun Jérouge (Ogoun Red Eyes). A malevolent Ogoun brother, red eyes being a mark of bad behavior. Some people feel that he is a member of the Pétro rather than the Vodoun pantheon.

Nago Piment. A member of the Ogoun escorte. He eats hot peppers.

Batagrou Nago

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776 Ghédé Nimbo, or Nibo, also called Baron Ghédé. One of the powerful deities of the
(774) Vodoun pantheon, particularly in the region of Port-au-Prince, where many houmforts cater extensively to him. Ghédé Nimbo, along with his numerous brothers and his vast escorte, is a "dead" loa, a spirit of the graveyard, a sexual rascal, and a violator
[778] of propriety. He is served apart from the other loa, and usually he has a separate altar or shrine outside the central houmfor. Cult centers for Ghédé are often near graveyards, though not necessarily so. Ghédé services abound around the main ceme-
776 tery of Port-au-Prince. Ghédé Nimbo has various manifestations, but he is usually

[12 A] [Ellis, The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples, p. 49; W. R. Bascom in Introduction to record album Drums of the Yoruba of Nigeria (New York: Ethnic Folkways Library, 1953) Cf. P. 354, Category 116. --Analyst]

[13 A] Ellis, The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples p. 38 ff. Cf. p. 354 Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[14 A] Ellis, The Ewe-Speaking Peoples, pp. 71-74; [illegible] Cf. p. 354 Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon].

dressed in a black frock coat, black top hat, and black trousers or a blue, white polka-dotted skirt. He carries a cane and smokes a pipe or a cigarette, according to which manifestation of Gèdé he represents. He talks with a strong nasal accent, which is acquired by anyone mounted by him. Gèdé Nimbo is always asking for money. Persons possessed by him may rub hot peppers on their tongues or in their eyes. In some parts of Haiti, Gèdé is thought to be identical with Baron Samedi. In a Vodoun service, no other loa cares to enter while a Gèdé is present; and Gèdé delights in appearing suddenly, uninvited, and obstructing the orderly progress of a ritual. Although Herskovits points out that Gedevou, or Gèdé, is a Dahomean totem,[2] it is worth noticing that in Haiti the Gèdé rites are often regarded as belonging to the Nago "nation." 776 [787] [171]

Gèdé Nimbo Mazaka. A Gèdé brother.

Gèdé Oclimé. A Gèdé brother.

Gèdé L'Oraille. A thunder or storm Gèdé. Like the other Gèdés, he is closely associated with death, and he is considered more of a malefactor than most. He is repulsive in appearance, with a dwarflike nature.

Gèdé Moulonè. A Gèdé brother.

Gèdé Nawan. A Gèdé brother.

Gèdé Nouvavou. A Gèdé brother.

Gèdé Vi. Said to be a son of Gèdé Nimbo, though some Haitians regard this loa as a female, possibly Gèdé Nimbo's wife.

Gèdé Zaclin. A loa of lightning, thought to be responsible for death by lightning, violent death in general, and destruction of cattle and other property by natural forces. He seems to be a Gèdé version of Kébioso or Sobo. [766]

Jean Zombi. One of the Gèdé brothers, a "dead" spirit.

Gèdé Ti Poux (Gèdé Little Fire)

Gèdé Rachè (Gèdé Tear Off)

Gèdé Jouissa (Happy Gèdé)

Towouè Gèdé, or Gèdé Towouè Fassal. This Gèdé is one that makes mischief as he enters a houngfor service.

Gèdé Zilé (Gèdé of the Island)

Gèdé Yaumé

Gèdé Yaoud

Coudjaguérè Gèdé (The Gèdé Who Mows Down)

Jonnasou Brisson. A loa who works with the Gèdé family, one of Gèdé Nimbo's graveyard assistants. He is described as having a white skin, suggesting that his surname is a corruption of "British."

Maman Gèdé. A sister of the Gèdé brothers.

Balaouzé. One of the Gèdé brothers. His name means to "sweep and sprinkle," a ritual activity characteristic of certain Vodoun ceremonies.

Manzè Brigitte, or Maman Brigitte. The mother of the Gèdé brothers.

Maît' Samedi. One of the Gèdé escorts.

Baron Samedi. One of a group of Barons who march with the Gèdés. They are so closely identified that some Haitians feel that Baron Samedi is merely another name for Gèdé Nimbo. Persons possessed in cemeteries are thought to be mounted by Baron Samedi or one of his brothers. Like the Gèdés, the Barons are spoken of as "dead" spirits. [787]

Baron Piquant. The loa in charge of grave digging.

[2] [Herskovits, Life in a Haitian Valley, p. 267, cf. p 354, Category 171. — Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776 Baron Lacroix, or Baron La Croix. Spoken of as "chief" of the cemetery, the one who plants the cross over the grave.
Baron Poussière, or Poussié (Baron Dust)
Baron Sol (Baron Earth, or Dirty Baron)
Baron Cimetière. The Baron who sits on the graves.
Baron Tinoué

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[775] [771] Azaka Mède, or Zaka Mède. Herskovits reports that *Azaka Mède* is the name of the stream which Dahomeans believe all the dead must cross.[15A]

[787] Cousin Zaka. The peasant Zaka, special patron of the country farmer and the people of the mountains. He is always portrayed as wearing the blue denim costume of the peasant, carrying the woven peasant knapsack called an *alfor* or *macoute* and a cocomacaque stick, and smoking a clay pipe. Persons possessed by Cousin Zaka are dressed in this way, and they speak in the manner of the mountain man, a style that is heard only in the most remote communities.

Minis Zaka, or Minister Zaka. An aspect of Cousin Zaka. Minister Zaka is a sort of Minister of Agriculture and a patron of peasant farmers.
Si Azaka. The wife of Minister Zaka.
Azaka Tonnerre, or Tonné. The Azaka who brings thunder and rain.
Azaka Baing Baing. One of the Azaka family.

Marassa. The loa of twins. The Marassa family of deities are in a special category, somewhat apart from other spirits. In an important Vodoun service, for example, there are invocations to the loa in general, to the Marassa, to the family ancestors, and to God.

Marassa Dosou. Patron of the first child after twins if it is a boy.
Marassa Dossa. Patron of the first child after twins if it is a girl.
Marassa Blancs. Patron of white twins.
Marassa Trois. Patron of triplets.
Marassa Grands. Patron of twins when one is a boy and one a girl.
Marassa Quat'. Patron of quadruplets, or of two consecutive sets of twins.
Marassa Bois (Marassa of the Woods). He is considered an "unbaptized" or "untamed" loa, and very savage. He likes sweets and never eats salt.
Marassa Dourd, or Marassa Cinq. Patron of consecutive twins and triplets.
Marassa Caille (Marassa of the House). This one eats salt.

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[771] Loko Attiso. He is usually pictured as the protector of the hounfor, or cult temple, and as the keeper of the altar (*pé*). In Dahomey, Loko is a deity of the Sky pantheon and a son of the divine Mawu and Lisa.[16A] He is still remembered in the Arara (Dahomey) cults of Cuba. He is also called Sindi or Singé.

Loko Attissou. Said to be Loko Attiso's wife.
Loko Azam, or Diam. A member of Loko Attiso's family.
Loko Dioué. A brother of Loko Attiso (Dioué + *Jébré*).
Loko Dinon
Loko Tjacourwèse
Loko Dauvou
Loko Bossou
Ti Loko

15A [Ibid., p. 280. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. --Analyst]
16A [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 108-109. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776

Avlo Loko Bayé. A comrade protector of the Loko family.
Loko Dée Pié

Damse Ossu. Among the Tshi-speaking people of West Africa there was a spirit called Adumi, a malignant giantess.[9] [171]
Ossu Jasson
Sousou Ylanso

Zoclina
Mazinnena
Mazinnena Entôka

Azima. An aged female loa. Sacrifices to her consist of rice, sugar cane, lima beans, and eggs. As in services for the deity Ezilie, perfumes are used during services for her. [782]

Amine Gêtêsoa Lablabem. A member of the *Amine* family. Amine is the name of a tribe of Dahomey.

Amine Nago. Another member of the *Amine family.*

Général Clermeil, or Président Clermeil. He is said to be the "father" and patron of all light children born to dark parents. Stories are sometimes heard of men who wrongly accused their wives of infidelity because of the lightness of their children, and who were finally mounted and punished by Clermeil. [782]

Clermézine. The light-skinned daughter of the dark Général Clermeil.

The family relationships or connections of the following deities are not clear. Some of them may belong to one or another of the foregoing groups, or to still uncited families.

Adja. A female loa associated with the arts of pharmacy. The Yoruba of Nigeria had a spirit named Adja who carried men and women off into the forest to teach them about the medicinal properties of roots and herbs.[10] In Haiti, Adja's mangé consists of cookies and chicken. Persons possessed by her sometimes eat broken glass. [191] [782] [782]

Adja Bosu, Anaoya Bosu, or Kanga Bosu. This deity is also known in Dahomey. [191]

Agaoman. A male deity characterized as a *zandolite*, a small lizard capable of changing colors. A person mounted by Agaoman sometimes climbs trees or posts. Some Haitians contend that a person possessed by this loa will change color, from dark to light. [787]

Agasu. In Dahomey, according to Herskovits, Agasu is the name of the panther fetish.[11] Dahomeans regard this deity as of special significance to the royal family. He was remembered among Negroes in Louisiana under the name Agassou. [171]

Agasu Yamsom. Related to Agasu.

Dadá. Among the Yoruba, Dadá was a brother of Ogoun and Changó, and was a patron of vegetables.[12]

Avinsid, also known as **St. Soleil.** Persons mounted as a result of exposure to the sun are thought to be possessed by this loa. The association of Atisold with the sun may be a syncretism. [769]

Azoumasé

Azo. A loa who likes the Juba dance.

[9] [Ellis, *The Tshi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, p. 68. Cf. p. 354, Category 116.---Analyst]

[10] [Ellis, *The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples*, pp. 79-80. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116.—Analyst]

[11] [Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, 165; cf. Ellis, *The Ewe-Speaking Peoples*, p. 83. Note that this deity was especially important in the line of Dahomey. Cf. p. 354, Category 116 --Analyst]

[12] [Ellis, *The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples*, pp. 45, 46. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116.—An.]

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

776 **Azui.** A snake deity.

Baboule. A loa who likes the Baboule dance.

Calbassie. Loa of the calabash tree.

Chébo Profil. An ancient male deity. Herskovits suggests that he may represent [114] the leopard, *sêbo* being the Fon word for that animal. The wildness of the attack on the sacrificial animal by persons possessed by Chêbo supports this conjecture. A [191] deity called Dada Segbo is prominent in the Rada Cult of Trinidad.

Simalo. A male loa who is believed responsible for fine physical proportions and bodily strength in men.

Coqui-Nan-Dleau. Probably the same as Coqui-Nan-Mer (Agwé).

[171] **Akadja.** This loa may well be the King Agadja of Dahomey who was said to be responsible for the coming of *vodu* (loa) into that country. Herskovits tells a legend about a woman named Hwandjile who prevailed upon the king to bring the *vodu* from the kingdom of Adja.[21] Hwandjile herself survives in Haiti under the name

Wanilé, or Houanilé

[821] [787] **Linglessou.** A rainbow loa. Persons mounted in sight of a rainbow are thought to be possessed by this deity.

Blinguessou. "Marches" with Linglessou.

Wangol, also called **Acowi Wangol** (King of Angola). This loa appears to be an interpolation from the Congo rites.

[787] **Alovi, or Gabalovi.** A masculine, dwarflike spirit who likes to disarrange things and play practical jokes. Persons possessed by Alovi may break up gatherings, discommode spectators and dancers, and generally make a nuisance of themselves. Some Haitians regard this loa as belonging more to the Pétro pantheon than to the Dahomé.

Maît' Bois (Master of the Woods). May be an interpolation of Maît' Grand Bois of the Congo-Guinée pantheon.

Maît' Dleau (Master of the Water). May refer to the loa Simbi.

Dan Wèzo, or Wézo. A loa known in the Artibonite region. The name is possibly a corruption of Dan Wèdo.

Dja Kéké

Evo, or Nèg' Evo. The name is that of a tribe on the Calabar coast of West Africa.

Fabo Pierre. Said to be the son of Pierre Basico.

Général Yenbatisse, or Jean Baptiste. Probably the Christian name of some Dahomé loa.

Grand Lesaigne. An aged, dwarflike loa, guardian and protector of children.

Grand Alaba, or Aliuba

Grand Aloumandia, or Manman Aloumandia. Believed to be a loa who was maît' tête of the Emperor Dessalines. Some informants consider this spirit to be a démon or loup-garou rather than a loa.

Hountor. The spirit of the Arada drums. There is a difference of opinion on whether Hountor is a loa in the precise sense or merely a drum spirit. The term is sometimes used to designate the largest drum of the Arada trio.

[184] **Jean Bateau.** A loa well known in the region of Léogane. When he "enters," the possessed persons talk *langage* into a *canarie* (clay water vessel).

[787] **Maît' David.** This loa always talks immaculate French, and persons possessed by him read cards and tell fortunes.

[21] [Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 104. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116.--Analyst]

Maît' Grand Chemin (Master of the Highway). Probably Legba. 776

Makanda. Believed to be the spirit of the famous houngan Makandal, who lived during the revolutionary period. He is symbolized as a snake which lives in the ground. Some informants think he is a Pétro rather than a Dahomé loa. (775)

Mambo Çeça

Tijean Danton (Ancient Tijean)

Whydah Wado. Whydah is the name of a seacoast town in Dahomey.

Zo. A fire deity of clear Dahomean origin.[22]

Olicha

Osai, or Osange. Known also among the Lucumí cults of Cuba. May be any one of the Osanges mentioned by Herskovits. (171)

Osange Lélé

Osedjaré

Papa Dambré

Pierre Bassico. This loa is sometimes identified with St. Peter. (177)

Pierre Damballa, Dambarra, or Dambara. Sometimes identified with St. Peter.

Pierre Wado. Related to Whydah Wado.

Poula, or Foula. This name is probably a tribal designation.

Sabata. Described as a loa of ancient times. Sabata or Sagbata is the so-called smallpox group of deities of Dahomey.

Sãila. A female deity, thought by some to belong to the Erzilie Freda family.

Silibo Gwéto. In Dahomey, according to Herskovits, Silibo is an ancient sib-founder. (171)

Silidja

Taureau

Ti Crab. This is a "false name"; this loa keeps his real name a secret.

THE AMBIVALENT SIMBI FAMILY

This group of loa in certain regions has attached itself to the Vodoun pantheon, elsewhere to the Congo-Guinée pantheon; but it has not maintained any kind of independent or semi-independent status. The deity Simbi and his family are of Congo origin. [171)

Simba. A male deity, patron of rain and drinking water. Said to be the father of the Simba brothers.

Simbi Dleau. The best known of the Simbi family. Like his father, he is the patron of fresh water, is associated with the spring, and usually is symbolized as a snake. The color sacred to him is white. Altars to Simbi Dleau usually are found at the spring or the well. Sometimes ponds are constructed for him within the hounfor. (823) (822) (778)

Simbi Kitta

Simbi Yendézo, or Simbi Nan Dé Zeaux (Simbi in Two Waters). Symbolized as a water snake who lives in the "upper" waters and the "lower" waters.

Grand Simba. The parent of Simba, and ancestor of the entire family of water loa.

Simbi Trois Zilé (Simbi of Three Islands)

Simbi Macaya

Simbi Grand Bois (Simbi of the Forest)

[22] [Ellis, The Ewe-speaking Peoples, pp. 71-74. Cf. p. 354, category 116.--Analyst]

[The Congo and Pétro Pantheons]

776 [822] [171] strong, he is a man-eater; constant reference is made to his mortar in which he grinds people. His ritual color is white; some people believe that his skin is also white. The grinding of a person in a mortar is an African symbolism. A bas-relief in Dahomey reported by Gorer[24A] shows King Glele pounding a vanquished king's head in a mortar.

Bosu Trois Cornes

Bosu Ylacaca

Bosu Sen Ylacaca Ylacaca

Dame Erzilie

Erzilie Bocuan

Erzilie Un Main Un Pied Un Jé (Erzilie One Hand, One Foot, One Eye)

Erzilie Balianne

Erzilie Danréké

Erzilie Jérouge (Erzilie Red Eyes). A malevolent spirit.[25A]

Erzilie Mapionne, or Mapiangue. A malevolent spirit.

Erzilie Fiamnse Pétro

Erzilie Achéve

Grand Aloumandia

Jean Pierre Poukmané

Legba Zin. A deity of Congo origin.

Damballa Laflambeau

Maît' Pimba. Said to be father of Zin Pimba.

Mambo Ayida (Priestess Ayida). A Pétro version of the Vodoun Ayida.

Marinette Congo. A malevolent female loa.

Marinette Pied Chèche (Marinette Dry Feet). Sister to Marinette Bras Chèche, and equally malevolent.

Ogoun Jérouge (Ogoun Red Eyes). A malevolent spirit. A Pétro form of the Vodoun deity, with a different character.

Ogoun Dleau (Ogoun of the Water). Brother of Ogoun Jérouge.

Ogoun Laflambeau. A fire loa. When he comes in he plays with hot coals, hot iron, and flames.

Ogoun Pétro. He is malevolent and "eats" men.

Pimba, or Pemba

Quançon Fer (Iron Pants)

Kitta Bamba (Chic Kitta)

Kitta Bayè (Kitta of the Gate). A gateway guardian.

Kitta Congo

Kitta Kanga

Kitta Legba. Possibly the same as Kita Bayè.

Racine

Rasal. A brother to Général Brisé. A benevolent loa.

Roi Grand Chemin (King of the Highway). May refer to Legba or to another highway loa.

Silibwo Boquoimé

Taureau Pétro. A Pétro version of the Vodoun Taureau.

Tijean Pétro. A malevolent loa who preys on children from the foliage of the coconut palm.

Tijean Pied Fin (Tijean No Feet). Brother to Tijean Pétro.

[24A] [Gorer, Africa Dances, p. 188. Cf. p.354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

[25A] [For footnote, see Cat. 116, p.354. --Analyst]

2. Games

THE GAME OF CAILLE, OR WARI

524 171 (184) The African counting game played with beans or stones in a carved wooden tray (known in various parts of Africa as *wari*, *mangala*, *adi*, etc.) is still known and played in the southwestern mountains of Haiti, particularly in the region south of the Léogane Plain. In Africa the game has innumerable variants. Most often the carved playing board or tray has two rows of six, seven, or eight holes, or pockets, sometimes with a large pocket at each end for winnings. In Ethiopia the playing board consists of three rows of six pockets each. In the upper Congo region a form of the game uses a board of twenty-eight pockets in four rows. Among wandering herding peoples in East Africa the holes are simply dug in the earth, and for playing pieces stones or dried camel droppings are used. The game not only is widespread throughout Africa but has an ancient tradition in Indonesia, the Philippines, southern and southeastern Asia, and the Arabic Middle East.

In Haiti the game is usually called *caille*, or "house." It is played on a long, sixteen-hole board of the kind used in West Africa. The playing pieces are usually maize kernels, dried peas, or wari beans. Where wari beans are used, the game is sometimes called by that name. This is a curious syncretism. The wari bean itself is so named because of a black marking which looks like a smile, in Creole *wa ri* ("going to laugh"). There are several ways of playing wari in Haiti; all have the common objective of capturing pieces on the opponent's side of the board. This is referred to as entering his "house" and "eating" the occupants, a terminology that is employed elsewhere where the game is known.

524 One method of playing is as follows. Starting with four pieces in every hole, a player takes up all the pieces from any hole on his own side of the board and redistributes them in a counterclockwise direction, dropping one into each hole as far as they will go. When his last piece is

[p. 332]

dropped, he picks up the contents of the next hole and continues the redistribution. Should his last piece eventually fall into an empty pocket, his turn is ended and his opponent begins. However, if his last piece falls into a hole containing one or two pieces, he "eats" those pieces along with the piece which he places there. He continues the play as before, starting with the following hole, monopolizing the play until he ends in an empty hole. The one who takes the most pieces wins. In some Haitian variants of the game, each person's play is limited to the distribution of the contents of a single hole. 524 [184]

THE GAME OF MAYAMBA

This game, like *caille*, appears to be of African origin. It is played with four chips made of shell, baked clay, or broken chinaware. One side of each chip is white, the other usually blue. Any number of players may participate, and, as in dice, all compete against the thrower. *Mayamba* has a strictly gambling incentive. If a player throws two whites and two blues, or four whites, or four blues, he wins. If he throws any odd combination he loses. [191] [525]

2: Courlander 8-5 (1837-1960) 1960 8V3 [illegible] 8V3

[7349)

Notes

Chapter 1: *The Making of the Haitian (pp. 1-7)*

[1] The name Canga survives in Haiti as the name of a deity.

[2] Herskovits, in *The Myth of the Negro Past* (p. 47), provides a tabulation of raw data found in the manifests recorded for slaves shipped to Virginia between 1710 and 1769: 20,964 slaves were reported shipped from "Africa," 3,652 from Gambia, 6,777 from "Guinea," 9,224 from Calabar, 3,860 from Angola, and 1,011 from Madagascar. Of those shipped from the island of Madagascar, 473 were listed as coming from Mozambique. [113] [195] [162] [569]

[3] Bartolomé de Las Casas.

Chapter 2: *Man and the Universe: Vodoun (pp. 8-18)*

[1] See Courlander, *Haiti Singing*, p. 9.

[2] Schweinfurth in *The Heart of Africa*, II, 31, says: "In Loango all exorcists and conjurors are called *ganga*." Leo Wiener, in *Africa and the Discovery of America* (Philadelphia: Innes and Sons, 1922), III, 32, reports: "Forms of *ganga* have in Bantu the meaning 'medicine' but also 'magic'—such as Nyika *ganga* and Kongo *nganga*." [113] [193] [1939] [1971]

[3] Gorer, *Africa Dances*, p. 120; Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, 308 ff.

[4] From the Fon *hun-si* or *hun-so*. Among the Arada of Dahomey a *hun-si* was regarded as a spiritual wife of the deity. She was a servant of the cult temple, and in some instances a wife of the cult priest. [1974] [1994]

[5] Translated from the French of Aubin, *En Haïti*, pp. 57-59.

[6] Deren, in her *Divine Horsemen* (pp. 119 ff.), gives an excellent report of a service for Agwé in a boat at sea. Aubin (*op. cit.*, p. 108) seems to have given the first description of this service at sea for the loa Agwé. [114] [96]

[7] Leyburn, *The Haitian People*, p. 119.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 123. Leyburn advances the theory that Vodoun developed during this period as a result of the vacuum left by the Church. Although the Church did in effect leave the field to the African cults, one must assume that the Arada, Congo, and other cults were already organized and possessed of great vitality before the Haitian revolution. Implicit evidence points to a continuity of cult life from the earliest days of the African on Haitian soil. There are no statistics to reveal the extent of cult membership at the end of the eighteenth century, but the content and form of Vodoun today are so overwhelmingly African that it is difficult to think of Haitian cult activity as the product of a renaissance. [114] [174] [195] [1971] [1993]

Chapter 3: *The Loa: Gods of the Haitian Mountains (pp. 19-29)*

[1] The term *vodoun*, used in this precise sense, conforms to the original Fon (Dahomean) usage. The term *[illegible]*, also of Fon origin, signifies "spirit" and belongs to the same root 976 197

996
192 as *hounsi*, *houncî*, *houngénicon*, *hountor*, etc. *Mystère* is of obvious French origin. *Loa* is probably from the Bantu, but it could be from the Yoruba.

[3] Various methods and formulas are employed in "tying" a loa. Sometimes making the sign of the cross is regarded as adequate, or the saying of a prayer. In "The Vodun Service in Northern Haiti" (*American Anthropologist*, XLII, 242–243), George Eaton Simpson reports that the "tying" of a loa sometimes results in a contest between the individual concerned and his houngan. If the houngan wants the *mait' tête* to enter in, he must surrender the ritual barriers the "horse" has put in the way. "One procedure for bringing on possession in a servant who has tried to 'tie' his chief god is for the priest to stand in front of the person whom he suspects, make the sign of the cross, and strike him on the forehead three times with a sacrificial stone. Usually these blows are hard enough to make blood spurt. The servant then begs the pardon of the angry god, and as soon as possible he unties the knots in his handkerchief [the method he has used for 'tying' his loa]."

(700) [4] Herskovits, *Dahomey*.

CHAPTER 4: *Death Rites* (*pp.* [illegible])

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171
113
[1] Maurice Delafosse, *L'Âme nègre*. Translation from *Free France*, special issue No. 4, French Press and Information Service, New York, June, 1945.

[2] Leo A. Verwilghen, in booklet describing peoples of the Kwango region, accompanying *Music of the Western Congo*, recordings issued by the Ethnic Folkways Library.

(000) [3] Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, pp. 88–89.

[171]
[969]
[776]
[113]
[4] W. M. Eiselen and I. Schapera, "Religious Beliefs and Practices," in Schapera, *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 250.

[5] Translated from the French of Aubin, *En Haïti*, p. 212.

[6] Herskovits, *Life in a Haitian Valley*, pp. 213–214.

[7] Hall and others, *Haitian Creole*, American Anthropological Association, Memoir No. 74, pp. 188–189.

[8] Simpson, "Four Vodun Ceremonies," *Journal of American Folklore*, April–June, 1946, pp. 155–162.

[9] As translated by Courlander from Simpson's Creole text, *ibid.*, p. 156. The preceding paragraph is from p. 155.

[10] Translated by Courlander from the Creole of Simpson's text.

[11] This and the preceding paragraph are from Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[964]
[966]
[793]
[776]
[787]
[525]
[12] These shells, as indicated elsewhere, are part of the paraphernalia of the Vodoun priest and appear to be an inheritance from the priests of the Fa cult of Dahomey. The divining shells are usually thrown on the ground in fours, and the readings depend upon combinations of "heads and tails." The manner of throwing the shells, as well as the number used, corresponds closely with the Haitian secular gambling game *mayamba* (see Appendix 2), though the purpose is obviously different. In some priestly rites in Haiti, ashes rather than the customary shells are used for divining.

[13] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

[15] Herskovits, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

[964]
[966]
[114]
[16] Herskovits (*ibid.*) notes that persons who die of smallpox, lightning, and certain other phenomena are not buried in coffins. Some of my informants indicated this to be their understanding also, but they said that the dead are buried without coffins for strictly economic reasons as well.

[17] Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

[18] Leyburn, *The Haitian People*, p. 156.

[19] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, 358.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 357–358.

[21] Herskovits, *Life in a Haitian Valley*, p. 214.

[22] Hall and others, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

CHAPTER 5: *Services for the Loa and the Family Ancestors* (*pp.* 47-74)

[1] Note that the houngan and the laplace are performing services normally performed by the *prêt' savane*. 000

[2] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, 165.

[3] Parsons, *Spirit Cult in Hayti*.

[4] Account given by Jean Raoul Pierre.

[5] Informant: Albert Kofi Prempeh, Ghana.

[6] Account given by Volusia Saintvil. A. W. Cardinall notes in his book *Tales Told in Togoland* (p. 69): "Trees are in most cases treated with respect. Before a man does fell one for a canoe he must and invariably does sacrifice to its spirit and apologizes for the harm he is about to do it." [illegible]

[7] The rite of *rafraîchi tête* is conducted periodically for a *mait' tête* after the original *lavé tête* ceremony. The purpose is to "refresh" the loa and make him content with his residence in the head of the devotee. [illegible]

[8] Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, p. 233.

[9] It is of interest to note the perseverance of traditional attitudes toward water rites in certain Negro cults in the United States. River baptism often is attended by ecstatic seizures in familiar form.

[10] Odette Mennesson Rigaud, "Notes on Two Marriages with Voodoun Loa," in Appendix A of Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, p. 263.

CHAPTER 6: *Songs of the Peristyle* (*pp.* 75-94)

[1] This theme is further commented on in chap. 13. Compare with the following excerpt from a Surinam song reported by Herskovits in *Suriname Folk-Lore* (p. 685): 171 532 534 774 776

I have no mother there,
I have no father there,
I have no sister there,
I haven't got anybody there.

CHAPTER 7: *In the Mapou Tree: Magic, Demons, and Compacts* (*pp.* 95-104)

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[1] Simpson, "Haitian Magic," *Social Forces*, October, 1940, p. 95.

[2] Note the coincidence of the term *gris-gris* or *grigri* as used in the United States, where it has the same meaning as *wanga*, or "voodoo" charm. [illegible]

[3] Simpson, "Haitian Peasant Economy," *Journal of Negro History*, October, 1940, p. 503. 171

[4] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, p. 243.

CHAPTER 8: *Mardi Gras and Rara: Jugglers, Maypoles, and Kings* (*pp.* 105-109)

[1] Aubin, *En Haïti*, p. 42.

[2] Marionettes of this kind have been observed in both East and West Africa and are well known in the region of Senegal. I saw a phallic marionette, virtually identical with the Haitian version, in the neighborhood of Khartoum, Sudan. [171] [541] [536]

CHAPTER 9: *Land and Work* (*pp.* 110-121)

[1] Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti*, p. 360. 583

[2] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, 300 ff., describes Dahomean polygamous marriage in its various forms. Although Dahomean plural marriage is complex in terms of gifts, obligations, and 171 595 423 178

relations between the husband and the wife's family, it is nevertheless commonplace for men who can afford it to have more than one wife.

[3]Simpson, in "Sexual and Familial Institutions in Northern Haiti," *American Anthropologist*, October-December, 1942, p. 656, observes that in northern Haiti there are three distinct types of *plaçage*. "A *femme-caille* shares her mate's house, while a *maman pitite* is a woman who has borne children for a man without living in his house. A *femme plaçée* does not live in her consort's house, and she has given him no children." Although none of these women has any legal rights of inheritance, Simpson notes, "moral claims to a man's property stand in descending order for these three classes of *plaçées*." [184] [428]

[4]Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*.

[5]UNESCO, *The Haiti Pilot Project*, p. 18.

[6]Simpson, "Haitian Peasant Economy," *Journal of Negro History*, October, 1940, p. 505.

[7]The group work patterns of Haiti show a common ancestry with Negro gang work patterns in the United States. While nothing so formalized as the *coumbite* persists among American Negroes, similarities are striking. The emphasis on rhythm, the swinging of hammers or picks in unison, the need for a singing leader, the responsive chorus, and the frequent use of some kind of percussion to keep time, all derive from a common concept of the nature of group work.

[8]Herskovits, "Some Aspects of Dahomean Ethnology," *Africa*, Vol. V (July, 1932), pp. 266–296.

[9]Cardinall, *Tales Told in Togoland* (p. 109), observes that among the Krachi people of Togoland "no man may have sexual intercourse with a woman for seven days before he goes hunting."

171 538 [10]An Ashanti story told by Rattray in *Akan-Ashanti Folk-Tales* credits the hedgehog with owning the original hoe; according to this version, the hoe escaped across the sea to the country of the white men, who then possessed the secret. Afterward, the white men brought many hoes to Ashanti.

CHAPTER 11: *Dancing and Dance Drama (pp. 126–136)*

[1]Quoted in Courlander, *Haiti Singing*, p. 73.

[2]Actually a banjo-like instrument of African provenience. The similarity of the word *bania* to *banjo* appears to be more than a coincidence.

[3]Saint-Méry, *De la danse*, as translated by Lillian Moore in "Moreau de Saint-Méry and 'Danse,'" *Dance Index*, October, 1946, p. 238.

[4]Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[5]Brandy or rum with gunpowder is sometimes drunk by persons possessed by the loa Ogoun, deity of war.

[6]Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[7]United Nations photograph no. 6265.

171 476 [8]Students of United States Negro life will recognize the word *coundjaille* as a variant of *coonjine*, a dance known on the lower Mississippi. According to one observer, Dr. Willis James of Spelman College, Atlanta, small Negro boys on the docks used to call to the boat passengers:

"Throw me a nickel
Throw me a dime
If you want to see me
Do the coonjine."

The term *coonjine* is still used to mean hand-loading of cotton bales on river boats. When this loading was done mainly by hand some years ago, the stevedores worked rhythmically in a line and sang. An old man from Louisiana testified that within his own memory the dockside *coonjine* was accompanied by makeshift drums and other percussion.

Chapter 12: *Songs of Complaint, Recrimination, and Gossip (pp. 137-147)* ooo

[1] See Herskovits and Herskovits, *Suriname Folk-Lore*, pp. 15-32.

Chapter 13: *Comments on the Mighty: Political Songs (pp. 148-162)*

[1] Léger, *Haiti, Her History and Her Detractors.*

Chapter 15: *Secret-Society Songs (pp. 166-169)*

[1] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, p. 256.

[2] See Courlander, "Abakwa Meeting in Guanabacoa," *Journal of Negro History*, XXIX (1944), 461 ff.

Chapter 16: *Folk Tales: Bouki, Malice, and Jean Sotte (pp. 170-182)*

[1] The theme of throwing magic objects upon the ground to ward off a pursuer is widely known, but the story as told in Africa has special characteristics of its own, such as the elephant hair. In Ashanti tales, the prize is the tail of the queen elephant, which is needed to serve as a coffin. 171 528 [529]

[2] This part of the tale, at least, dealing with the dragon that swallowed the sun, seems to be known in western Europe. Some aspects of the tale of Grandmother's Bath have come from France. [199]

[3] Variants of "The President Wants No More of Anansi" are widely known around the world. The story is told among the Somali of East Africa, with the legendary character Abunuwas, a Persian trickster hero, playing the title role. Anansi plays the same part in West Africa, and other trickster heroes are identified with the same adventure in India and Southeast Asia. The tale has been reported also from the West Indian island of St. Martin ("He Meets the King's Conditions," in Parsons, *Folk-Lore of the Antilles, French and English*, Part II). 529 171

[4] The fishing story narrated here, except for the chase, is found in many versions in West Africa. The second part of the tale, the pursuit, has a special Haitian flavor. Bouki chasing Malice through the cult chief's ritual grounds and the church, with Malice trying to make appropriate use of the situation, is a special delight to Haitians. The dialogue between Bouki and Malice's behind is also regarded as very humorous.

[5] Known in virtually all Negro communities in the Americas, the tale of eating the honey (or butter, pork, or lard) seems to have come to the New World by way of Africa, although it is also known in Europe.

[6] The theme of the singing tortoise (or other animal, or an object such as a skull) has appeared in folk tales ranging from West Africa through the Americas to the Far East. This Haitian variant bears a striking resemblance to a tortoise story from the Gold Coast (Ghana). In the Gold Coast variant the tortoise asks the hunter who finds him to keep his singing ability a secret, but the hunter has to tell about his discovery. When the village headman hears about it, he calls for a test. The tortoise refuses to sing, and the hunter is punished. Then the tortoise sings his song, which emphasizes the hunter's bad faith. The philosophical tone of the Haitian tortoise's songs, particularly the last one, is quite similar. The last line of the song is from a Haitian proverb.

Chapter 17: *Children's World: Gage Songs and Games (pp. 183-188)* ooo

[1] The description of this game is from Paul, "Les Jeux à gage," *Bulletin du Bureau d'Ethnologie*, July, 1947, p. 52.

H. Courlander 8-5 (1957-1958) 1960 SV3 [illegible] SV3

CHAPTER 18: *Musical Instruments* (pp. [illegible])

[1] Herskovits and Herskovits, *Suriname Folk-Lore*, p. [illegible]. The [illegible] is also known in Surinam.

[2] Informant: Joseph Longo, [illegible].

[3] Library of Congress album, *Folk Music of Venezuela*.

[4] Pamphlet accompanying recordings, *Music of Equatorial Africa* (New York: Ethnic Folkways Library, [illegible]).

[5] See Courlander, "Musical Instruments of Cuba," *Musical Quarterly*, April, [illegible], pp. [illegible].

[6] Comhaire-Sylvain, *Les Contes haïtiens*, pp. [illegible].

[7] Curt Sachs, *Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente* (Berlin, [illegible]), pp. [illegible].

[8] Schweinfurth, *The Heart of Africa*, I, [illegible].

[9] Informant: [illegible] Turi, [illegible].

[10] See Courlander, *op. cit.*, p. [illegible].

APPENDIX 1: *The Pantheon* (pp. [illegible])

[1] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, [illegible] ff.

[2] See Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, pp. [illegible], and Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, [illegible] ff.

[3] Ellis, *op. cit.*, p. [illegible].

[4] Herskovits, *op. cit.*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[7] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. [illegible].

[8] Herskovits, *op. cit.*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[9] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[10] Library of Congress Recording No. [illegible].

[11] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, p. [illegible]; W. B. [illegible], in Introduction to record album *Drums of the Yoruba of Nigeria* (New York: Ethnic Folkways Library, [illegible]).

[12] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible] ff.

[13] Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible]; Herskovits, *op. cit.*, I, [illegible].

[14] Herskovits, *Life in a Haitian Valley*, p. [illegible].

[15] *Ibid.*, p. [illegible].

[16] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, [illegible].

[17] Ellis, *The Tshi-speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, p. [illegible].

[18] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible].

[19] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, [illegible] ff. Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples*, p. [illegible], says that this deity was especially important in the town of Agbome.

[20] Ellis, *The Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible].

[21] Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, [illegible].

[22] Ellis, *The Ewe-speaking Peoples*, pp. [illegible].

[23] Saint-Méry, *De la danse*, p. [illegible].

[24] Gorer, *African Dances*, p. [illegible].

776 [25] Red eyes as a symbol of malevolence appear in the folklore of many Negro cultures.
538 Our own American ballad about the gambler Stackalee states:

171 "The judge says, 'Stackalee, I would spare your life,
826 But I know you're a bad man, I can see it in your red eyes.'"

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966

SV3 Haiti SV3

648 The financing of these many revolutions was usually provided by
669 foreign merchants, bent upon installing a government that would
565 grant them special economic concessions (Munro, 1964:326–31). The
701 United States occupation ended this doleful succession of regimes
439 and, by throwing its weight to the elite, by suppressing military activity in the countryside, and by reforming the army, the United States gave a new meaning to the separation of the elite and the yeomanry. Leyburn's interpretation is consistent with these events; yet some Haitian scholars have differed with Leyburn's analysis.

114 In a lengthy review article, the doen of Haitian historians, Dr. Jean
564 Price-Mars (1942:1–50), questions the applicability of the term
563 "caste" to the social groupings of Haitian society. He notes that
671 Haitian law after the revolution never legitimized any distinction on grounds of physical type, unlike a society such as the United States—
144 that in fact, the very basis of Haitian polity was the absence of such distinctions. Furthermore, Leyburn's interpretation is qualified by the fact that the elite and the rural masses are not entirely distinctive physically. In some parts of rural Haiti, particularly in the southern peninsula, there are many light-skinned people; and many individuals who qualify as members of the elite on all other counts are very dark in appearance. The fact that being "Negro" or "white" in Haiti is viewed as a matter of degree, rather than of kind, complicated by all the other criteria of social position employed in drawing distinctions, has important implications for the way social barriers have operated in that country.*

114 Leyburn did not contend that all the effects of the United States
565 occupation were in the direction of increasing the gap between the
ELITE AND THE YEOMANRY.

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568 * In this regard, Haiti is aligned with most of Latin America, in contradistinction to the
564 United States, where many persons believe that "one drop of Negro blood" [sic] makes a
171 "Negro." The failure of North Americans to distinguish between sociological and genetic
144 categories of physical type has led to considerable confusion in their dealings with Latin America and in their understanding of Latin American societies. North American race prejudice at its most extreme sees color as the primary basis for social ranking, and no individual accomplishment (for instance, in terms of economic or intellectual success) can overshadow the inferior status unalterably bestowed by certain physical traits. Haitian—and generally all Latin American—social distinctions do not rest solely on considerations of physical type; a black skin does not "doom" an individual if his attainments make him otherwise the equal of his lighter-skinned fellow citizens. Hence, it might be argued that the term "caste" would be more appropriate when applied to the Negro people of the United States (regardless of phenotype, and including those "Negroes" who are *sociologically* identified with the Negro people even if their physical appearance is dramatically Caucasian) than when applied to the peoples of Latin America.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

Nor is it sufficient to label *Duvalierisme* "pathological" or "paranoid." 642
The roots of this ideology are to be found in Haiti, not elsewhere;
its supporters are the product of Haitian times and ideas; and
their social identity, while not entirely clear, would probably pose
few enigmas if enough data were available.* In order to make clear [114]
these assertions, however, it is necessary to look again at Haitian society,
the Haitian society Leyburn has described so well, and to reexamine
the terms that have been used by him and by others to describe it. 174

Though the societies of the Caribbean Sea differ significantly from 175
each other, many of them share certain general historical experiences. 171
Unlike the colonial areas of the Old World, these islands were largely 648
populated from abroad, and in this regard they resemble the Atlantic
lowland areas of mainland America. However, the colonial history of
the islands meant that they would long remain the instruments of
policy formulated in foreign capitals. Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and other
islands were, during most of their postconquest history, the outposts
of far-flung colonial empires, and the design of their societies was
conditioned by this dependence and subjugation. As "plantation islands,"
their agriculture, demography, mode of settlement, and social
structure were attuned to metropolitan needs and objectives. Unlike [161]
most of Africa and Asia, the Antilles lost their native populations almost
entirely, owing to enslavement, overwork, disease, and war,
early in the era of conquest and settlement. There remained the vestiges [177]
of native traditions, assimilated into the new, growing cultures
of the postconquest period. The Indians themselves, wherever they [563]
were able to survive, were also assimilated through interbreeding
with Old World migrants. 174

The newcomers came from Europe, Africa, and Asia, bringing 175
with them what they could of their ancestral traditions, but never 171
able to transfer their social heritages as intact bodies of belief and behavior. 167
Hence the cultures of the new Caribbean societies were built
up out of elements originating in many different places, while their
social forms took shape under conditions of colonial control. The
peoples of the islands were able to maintain some continuities with

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* One interpreter of the Haitian political scene (Bastien, 1960:845–48) has suggested that Leyburn's analysis of Haitian society as a "two-caste" system greatly influenced local political thinking by strengthening one idea: "the black intellectual must regain political power for the benefit of the country's majority."

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

new ways. The virtual extirpation of indigenous culture, however, 177
occurred in few areas outside the New World; it was particularly 178
characteristic of the coastal and lowland areas of this hemisphere.
Hence, Caribbean culture is almost entirely transplanted and recently 177
synthesized. In the Caribbean area, an additional distinction lay in the 174
persistently colonial character of the islands and in the effects of this 563
colonialism on local life. Wherever the plantation flourished, large
populations of Africanorigin grew out of the original importations of
slaves. This was true from the southern United States to Brazil, but
was especially marked in the islands, where local populations of European
extraction were either absent or reduced by the spread of the
plantation. Only in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Santo Domingo, and in 171
some of the smaller islands that developed no plantation system, were 563
substantial proportions of Europeans to be found. In Haiti, the early 174
cultural admixture of Colonial Spanish and Indian was soon swamped
by the cultures of Africa, and the European cultural component became
predominantly French after 1697, when the western third of
Hispaniola—today's Haiti—was ceded to France.

But Haitian society did not come to be purely African, in any 174
sense, nor is that society more than broadly similar to the other societies 177
of the Caribbean. The kind of society in which the French
masters and their African slaves met and mixed, and the subtropical, 178
colonial environment in which they lived, imposed their own conditions
for culture growth. What the Haitian people could keep as a
living part out of the African past was limited by the regimen of
slave plantation life; what they could borrow or copy from their
masters was affected by the nature of the social relationships between
those who held power and those who had to bend to it. Ultimately,
independence meant that the Haitian people could employ what they
already knew and practiced under slavery, but in a wholly new
social setting.

The substantial isolation that followed independence led to slowed 175
change, both social and cultural, and to the gradual spread of the yeoman 177
way of life throughout rural Haiti. From 1804 until the United 178
States occupation, Haiti was probably less affected by external developments 171
than any other country in the hemisphere. In this regard,
its social history is noticeably different from that of the other Caribbean
islands, some of which, like Puerto Rico and Cuba, were forcibly
brought back into the mainstream of world developments in the

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966

SV3 Haiti SV3

175 same century in which Haiti withdrew. The yeomanry of Haiti in
177 the nineteenth century was hence able to develop a traditionalism of
178 unusual firmness and persistence.

171 This traditionalism, however, has had a high price. The economic
productivity of the rural cultivator has not risen; it can be argued
433 convincingly that poor land use, erosion, and population growth
321 have meant lower levels of consumption for the common people in
161 1966 than obtained a hundred years or more ago. The rural masses,
565 though overwhelmingly consisting of landholders, have been unable
-178 to break out of a stagnation that is economic as well as cultural. Such
-175 stasis has been based to some extent on the limited responsiveness of
the rural folk to outside stimulus. But also important in maintaining
114 the past is the national institutional system that took on its character-
511 istic shape after 1804, and under which the rural masses still live. That
system, the origins of which Leyburn has examined and assessed with
such care, is controlled, as we have seen, by a numerically small segment of the national population that is markedly distinct from the yeomanry itself.

-565 The nature and internal differentiation of the elite needs much
more study, though it seems clear already that it is by no means a single solidary class embracing all but the yeomen. Whatever the structure of the elite, the relationship between the yeomen on the one hand and the real holders of power on the other must be understood if one is to understand Haiti. The yeoman is defined in terms of the elite; he is dependent upon it and subject to it. This is what is meant when it is said that the yeomanry, like the elite, forms only a part-society. Yet without the yeomen, there would be no elite. The elite live by controlling and taxing the rural masses, and find their sustenance and their power in rural productivity. Elite and yeomen, then, are bound together in unequal but interdependent relationships in Haiti as they are in other less developed societies of a similar kind. In such cases, the political role of the yeomanry is usually minor, and few opportunities may arise for the expansion of its political strength.
565 If the yeomanry fails to increase its productivity in ways that enable it
-433 to control more of its own surpluses, its role in affecting national po-
664 litical decisions may grow narrower rather than wider, and this om-
642 inous possibility has become a worldwide phenomenon. It becomes
more intensified wherever industry and trade grow, unaccompanied by parallel growth in yeoman productivity or in new and more widely representative national institutions.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

That the separateness of yeomanry and elite had visible and socio- 565
logically important expression in physical type in Haiti was a clear 563
consequence of the history of that country. But the traditional pre- 664
ponderant light skins at the top of the structure and the preponderant 642
darkness at its base are less important than the domination of the total structure, and of the institutional means for changing it, by a mere fraction of the national population. It is the *power* of the elite which has mattered through time; its physical appearance has been only a historically derived expression of that power. Such a balance of politically weak masses against numerically sparse powerholders is common, perhaps particularly in the "less developed world"; but each such case has certain special characteristics. Haiti's special nature is
not simply in its being a yeoman country, and one in which a small [181]
group dominates the mass. As a rural, agrarian, unindustrialized, po- [171]
litically sovereign, and quasi-capitalistic country, Haiti shares much with other lands; but in each regard its own particularity needs to be assessed.

The rurality of Haiti is extreme, not simply because there are no 361
concentrations of population in excess of 25,000 except for Port-au- 369
Prince and Cap Haïtien but also because towns of intermediate size 489
are few in number, and the urban concentrations in the country's two cities are substantially of relatively recent rural origin. Port-au-Prince dominates the Republic in all of its economic, political, and social activities. Furthermore, the rural towns have been losing to the capital, not gaining from it. Until the United States occupation, the larger towns of the coast, such as Jérémie, Jacmel, and St. Marc, were united economically with each other, and to some extent with the capital, by a lively coastwise shipping system, and the inland towns were tributary to those of the coast. The growth of inland transport during the occupation strengthened the interior towns while coastwise shipping declined, but the capital grew even more important as the sole economic center of the Republic. Since the 1940s, the rapid deterioration of the road system has left both inland and coastal towns enfeebled; only Port-au-Prince has remained strong.

The dominion of Port-au-Prince is firm, and there is no focus of -369
power in the countryside that can counteract it. Those few foreign 473
enterprises in Haiti that base themselves outside the capital city use 504
local port facilities (e.g. Miragoâne for Reynolds Aluminum, Cap -489
Haïtien for the sisal plantations of the north) and do not affect the
development of the interior transport.

369 development of interior transport. The only passable roads in the
694 Republic run from Aux Cayes in the south to the capital, and from
Cap Haitien in the north to the capital. Transport and communica-
646 tions simply symbolize the power that Port-au-Prince wields, since
the same circumstances characterize all national institutional arrange-
ments. Thus Haiti is an extreme example of urban domination, even
though its urban population is a fraction of the national total. The
consequence has been to keep most of the rural folk cut off from the
apparatus that effects national decisions and shapes national policy.
Haiti's national legislature, never important in limiting presidential
power, is less so today than ever; at best, it had only represented the
interests of provincial towns as opposed to the capital, and never the
interests of the mass of country people.

701 The local military and judiciary officials possess the formal author-
692 ity vested in them by the state, and their power is very considerable.
Few local people would dare challenge their decisions, and the de-
642 vices for appeal against arbitrary exercise of authority are few. Admit-
369 tedly, at the lowest local level the *chef de section*—who is traditionally
appointed by the captain of the military in the *commune* center and is
himself a yeoman—is subject to some genuine restraint by local in-
habitants. Jean Comhaire-Sylvain (1955:620–24) has argued con-
vincingly that the people of a community are capable of insisting on
democratic procedure in those matters requiring decision that come
to the attention of local authority. But such decisions have little or
nothing to do with larger issues. The yeomanry cannot directly make
its wishes felt in national politics; and national politics are conducted
almost without reference to the aspirations of the rural masses. It is
precisely in the separateness of local life from the mainstream of na-
tional decision-making that the political impotence of the yeomanry
is demonstrated.

311 Haiti's agrarian nature cannot be expressed simply by saying it is a
423 rural and yeoman country. Haiti does not have a "land problem," as
that phrase is conventionally applied to Latin America. It does, it is
● 171 true, suffer from land shortage, inasmuch as too little land is worked
at too low a level of productivity and must feed too many mouths.
But a very substantial proportion of the rural masses owns land, or
has regular access to it. It is true that most land is held in small plots
and without clear title. But those persons who own no land or who
lack land to work are proportionally fewer than in any other Carib-

311 bean country, and perhaps fewer than in any country in Latin America.
423 The agriculture itself, with the exceptions now of those very few
171 large-scale plantations in sisal and sugarcane, is adapted to small plots
and is worked with intensive labor and few tools on hilly land. Compared
433 with agricultural production, especially of cash crops, in most
178 mainland Latin American countries, productivity is low. The yeomanry
is conservative in its agricultural practices, and not ready to
change unless the changes entail minimal risk and the gains to be realized
241 are clearly demonstrable (Erasmus, 1952:20-26). Yeomen cultivate
177 with three goals in mind: cash income from world-market
185 commodities (for instance, coffee, sisal, vetiver); cash income from
434 items produced for local sale and consumption; and subsistence.
While they are heavily involved in production for sale, their crop
choices and land-use patterns rest fundamentally on a subsistence
orientation. All grow a substantial part of their own food, especially
sorghum, maize, sweet potatoes, taro, manioc, malanga (*Xanthosoma
sagittifolium* Schott), plantains and bananas, fruits and vegetables, and
423 rice where possible. The land is invested with considerable affect:
823 gods live in it; it is the ultimate security against privation; family
471 members are buried in it; food and wealth come from it; and it is
good in itself, even if not cultivated. While such attitudes are common
in yeoman societies, Haiti's history of slavery, and of access to
land through revolution, has given a special symbolic significance to
landowning. Land is valued above all else and is sometimes held "uneconomically"—that
is, even when the capital and labor power to
work it are lacking.

114 Leyburn describes better than any other writer the history of land
175 acquisition by the yeoman after 1804. The French plantations lay in
423 ruins, never to recover, while early authoritarian attempts to restore
the prerevolutionary economy under native Haitian leadership soon
failed. In the course of a century, the Haitian people laid claim to their
own soil, while population growth and the adoption of the French
tradition of equal inheritance progressively reduced the average size
of holdings. In spite of some plantation development after the United
States occupation, most agricultural land in Haiti is still employed in
small holdings, and "land reform" in the conventional sense—the
breaking-up of large estates and the creation of a class of small landholders—is
462 nearly irrelevant to Haiti's needs.

443 As today's yeomanry cultivates, so its womenfolk market. Nearly

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

342
322 unchanged from an earlier era. The prevailing quality of Haitian
178 rural and craft industry, then, is one of great stability and conservatism.

493 At the same time, of course, major events since the revolution have
463 left their imprint on this part of life. Hardly a roadside village in
Haiti today, for instance, lacks an automobile mechanic, even though
these men are mostly self-educated and work with hardly any tools.
Their skills became part of Haitian culture in this century and are often
383 of a simple order no longer typical of more developed areas. Tire
tubes, for instance, are "vulcanized" by the use of an ingenious device
177 made from a board and an old piston, kerosene providing the
heat to make the seal; this technique, along with the sewing of damaged
truck tires, was almost certainly introduced and diffused by the
United States Marines.

47 But these quaint additions do not alter the fact that shop and factory
31 industry are nearly absent, and extractive industry virtually nonexistent.
178 Haiti's one alumina extraction enterprise, foreign-owned, is
now shut down. There is but one flour mill, and that is foreign-
[258] owned as well. One or two textile mills and sugar factories, established
[339] with foreign capital, still function, as do a modern cement
[464] factory and a few other small plants established in the 1950s. These
industries, scanty as they are, were of great importance to Haiti, since
they represented substantial investments, held out the promise of reduced
dependence on imports in significant categories, and contributed
to the beginnings of an industrial proletariat. However, they involved
only a tiny fraction of the national labor force, and they have
not proved entirely successful. As a result, Haiti lacks any reserve of
labor acquainted with modern industry, even though many people,
both urban and rural, work at tasks that might be considered more
industrial than agricultural.

-47 Most important for the present discussion, the minor developments
433 in Haitian industry have not led to an expanded market and have not
-178 resulted in any firm increase in productivity. Industrial growth, in
● 171 the sense in which it has occurred in countries such as those of Western
Europe—or for that matter in Mexico or Argentina—is entirely
lacking. The absence of such growth is perhaps especially significant
if Haiti be compared with a neighbor such as Jamaica or Puerto Rico.
[648] These countries, one now independent, the other a North American
dependency—have both gained real increments from the investment
activities of outsiders;

433 activities of outsiders; Haiti has experienced few such increments, even
as a result of the United States occupation. Its citizens cannot readily
47 migrate anywhere; its educational system cannot prepare its people
171 adequately for the modern world; its civil service has proved neither
178 stable nor reliable; its labor force has limited experience with the factory
648 system; and even two decades of active North American intervention did nothing to remake the economic and political structure of the nation. In more recent years, some of the "development projects" foisted on the people of a sovereign Haiti by foreigners working with Haitian officials would not have been tolerated by the colonial representatives of any foreign power obligated to report its activities before the United Nations Trusteeship Council. In view of these things, one is tempted to claim that Haiti has suffered from all the disadvantages of political sovereignty while enjoying none of its advantages.

Unlike those colonial dependencies that were able, over time, to develop internal political ideologies through which to face the pressures imposed by the colonial powers, Haiti was tested by hardly any challenge but its own lack of development. In this sense only can it be said that the freedom Haiti had won in an incredible revolution against powerful enemies came to be a punishment. The struggle brought the Haitian people justified admiration in many quarters, but its price has been isolation and virtual abandonment.

648 It was the United States occupation that made a lie of Haitian sovereignty,
72 and even of the invincibility of its people. The Haitian "bandits," variously estimated to have numbered from 2,000 to 6,000, who died in what is probably best described as a war of resistance against the North Americans, were barely able to maintain even a brief local conflict against several well-armed companies of United States Marines. Yet that occupation gave Haiti little in return for its denial of the claim of national sovereignty. The public works and reform programs instituted by the United States, designed to give the country roads, schools, hospitals, a disciplined army, a "legitimate" government, and a schooled civil service, hardly endured longer than the occupation itself, since nothing had been done to transform the social and economic base of the society. Within a decade of the North American withdrawal, the gleaming superstructure the occupation
000 created had begun to decay. The major effect of North Amer-

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966

SV3 Haiti SV3

about Haitian society.* It does not, however, take note of the re-
114 markable failure of foreign experts to make any adequate assessment
of the potentialities of that society, or of its most-needed changes.
Some of the problems of development, remarked on by Leyburn in
1941, have never even been explored adequately: the advisability of
primary education in Creole; the need for an effective agricultural
extension; the relationship of nutrition to work habits; and the like.
Even basic sociological studies of a sort that could provide data for
planned change are lacking—"of the process of socialization . . . of
the motivating forces, the dominant wishes, the attitudes and social
648 values of the masses . . . of social mobility" (pp. 308–09). Foreign-
inspired development projects have been, for the most part, crash
projects, designed to satisfy Haitian political goals, rather than eco-
nomic or social goals. A productive relationship between foreign
development agency representatives and government officials has
never been achieved, nor have the failures ever been subjected to
analysis or reflection. Emphasis has been put on large-scale schemes,
rather than on more modest, long-term programs which would re-
quire actual cooperation with the rural masses on the local level (cf.
Erasmus, 1952; Friedmann, 1955; De Young, 1958). Many—prob-
ably most—foreign planners who have worked in Haiti have never
even bothered to learn the national language, let alone the funda-
mentals of the culture of the Haitian people.

114 In these terms, it is not enough merely to bemoan the feeble insti-
tutional structure of Haiti. Some attention, at least, should be given
to the striking incapacity of outsiders to deal with that structure crea-
tively. Leyburn's book exacts our respect precisely because its author,
unlike most foreign visitors, makes plain that he takes Haiti, and the
needs of the Haitian people, seriously.

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668 * Some observers are less pessimistic than the writer. The sons of the elite, many of them
educated abroad, elements of a Social Christian progressive movement, and possibly a few
171 "Castro-left" radicals, may eventually coalesce into a successful opposition, it has been argued.
The writer, however, remains unconvinced. Structural changes of the sort wrought by the
114 Castro regime in Cuba were predicated on the existence of mass political opposition to Batista-
type governments, and on the existence of industrial and rural proletarian sectors organized
into large-scale movements. These "preconditions," as I see them, are entirely lacking in Haiti
of today.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

[p. xliii]

FOREWORD

THE United States, embarked upon a policy of good neighborliness toward 648
the other countries of the Western Hemisphere, is beginning to improve 171
its acquaintance with the republics to the south. Most of its efforts at
present are directed toward an understanding of the large and important
powers, such as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina, which, because of their
size and resources, are potentially our greatest allies—or, if we fail in our
policies, our sources of greatest danger. There are, however, twenty republics
to the south of us, many of them small. A truly good neighbor does not
ignore near-by families who are lacking in wealth, even those who are
known to differ among themselves.

Of the twenty Latin-American republics, the second smallest is Haiti. 721
The United States was only twenty years old when the people of this little 648
country (which, for all its diminutive size, had been France's wealthiest 642
colony of the eighteenth century) fought their own war of independence,
and in 1804 founded the second free state in the hemisphere. Haiti has
many claims upon the attention of the United States: its war against
France in 1802–3 was at least a contributing factor in Napoleon's willingness
to sell Louisiana to this country; it was the first independent Negro
state in the modern world; its foreign policy has long been intertwined
with our own; finally, the nineteen-year American Occupation of the
country has brought us into an even closer relationship with Haiti than
independent factors could produce.

When the country was young there was a spate of books trying to 114
answer the question whether a nation ruled by blacks could long endure.
In more recent years, works on the Antillean republic have generally dealt
with single phases of its life, as for example its political relations with the
United States, or its "Voodoo" practices. There is, however, no connected
story of the growth of its social institutions out of the backgrounds of
slavery and French colonial life, or of the slow shaping of these institutions 121
through the nineteenth century. It is this growth which the present volume
undertakes to describe. Political history has been introduced only so far as
necessary to provide the convenient pegs upon which most of us are accus-

565 Modern usage, having borrowed the word "caste" from India,
● 171 employs it loosely to mean a rigid class system of which the people
are conscious.[4] In India caste was always endogamous and connected with occupation. Kroeber defines it as "an endogamous and hereditary division of an ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with other such subdivisions."[5] Castes, as distinguished from social classes, "have emerged into social consciousness to the point where custom and law attempt their rigid and permanent separation from one another." By each of these criteria Haiti has castes.

565 The élite are endogamous in that they would not consider marriage
582 into the masses. The one exception to the endogamic practice is
marriage with a white foreigner. Whereas in India all members of a
[463] caste had the same general occupation, in Haiti several occupations
[461] are open to caste members; but the distinction between honorable
and demeaning work is understood by all, so that no person has free choice as regards the two larger categories. Haitian law does not name the social divisions, nor does it legislate the masses into a subordinate position[6]—for the simple reason that there is no conceivable need to enact what already exists. The laws of Haiti are administered by élite officials; these men make the definitions and interpretations. The judge always knows the custom, so that (as in most countries) the same offense brings different penalties for upper- and lower-class offenders. Custom holds sway, and custom is more tyrannical than any body of law.

Inside the castes may be found social distinctions familiar in democracies and in every other kind of society. Interest in politics, business, literature, or sport draws people of like minds together and makes cliques. There are well-to-do families who outshine their neighbors, just as there are peasant landholders who dominate their rural communities. A high civil official has more prestige than a doctor with a small practice, just as among the masses a house servant for an élite family outranks a beggar.

565 For the majority of Haitians, life is too elemental to be concerned
511 with artificial wants. The peasant talks, unfettered by rules of gram-

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105 [4] See also W. Lloyd Warner, "American Caste and Class," *American Journal of
185 Sociology*, XLII, No. 2 (Sept. 1936), 234–237; and John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a
Southern Town* (New Haven, 1937), pp. 62 ff.

[5] A. L. Kroeber, "Caste," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, III, 254.

[6] Such efforts were made, however, in the early days of the republic. See chap. III.

Northern Haiti flourished magnificently under Christophe's 175
sternly benevolent rule. The King had that daring spirit of initiative 643
which was so generally lacking in later Haitian history; he had, in 642
addition, the power necessary to force through a new adjustment if 433
the old way showed defects.[17] He excited artificial wants among his
leaders by making nobles of them, and then compelled them to satisfy
these wants without ever slipping back to a lower standard of living. Thirteen years of enforced labor and of order kept by a rigorously effective police force gave northern Haiti the kind of prosperity
she had known in colonial days. Christophe encouraged commerce [438]
and protected foreign traders. He called in all debased coinage, sub- [439]
stituting for it sound gold and silver currency. The revenue he raised [692]
was larger than it had been since 1791, amounting to about $3,500,000
annually. Probably the most eloquent testimony to his success is the fact that at his death, when the kingdom of the North was once more united with the republic of the South, more than six million dollars found their way into the republican treasury.

The Black King's economic system worked. It was based on a 175
social division of the people, with the masses doing manual labor, 565
and the aristocrats definitely set apart and recognized as upper class.
By 1820 Haiti was well on its way toward the caste system.

3. *Pétion* (*1807–1818*) 171

Almost all Latin-American countries in the nineteenth century 175
exhibited one common feature: an aristocratic landowning class 631
lording it over peons. Haiti did not follow this pattern. She had aristocrats and peasants, but the aristocrats did not own most of the land, and the peasants were not peons. If later rulers had kept the organization of economic life begun by Toussaint and developed by his fellow blacks, Dessalines and Christophe, it is almost certain that Haitian social evolution would have resembled that of the rest of Latin America, for it would not have been a great change from

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[17] Duraciné Vaval, "Le Roi d'Haïti Henri Christophe," in *Revue de la Société d'Histoire et de Géographie d'Haïti*, II, No. 3 (June 1931), p. 14, says that Haiti's periodic civil troubles and social misfortunes, both ending in a diminution of the state's autonomy, have been due to economic maladjustments. "Our weaknesses in political life derive from our immobility in material production." Immobility is an index of stagnation. Few rulers of Haiti have been at once powerful enough to overcome the immobility and wise enough to know what measures had to be taken. [114]

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966

SV3 Haiti SV3

171 feudal holdings to absolute ownership of land by the influential. It is
175 strangely paradoxical that an aristocrat, the light-skinned Pétion,
631 representing the cultured group in society, broke the economic
power of his own aristocratic class and made the former slaves not serfs but peasants. It is doubtful whether he intended either result.

175 Alexandre Pétion was the antithesis of Haiti's three eminent blacks
643 in all but military skill. Toussaint's genius as a fighter lay in his surprise moves, Dessalines' in his recklessness, Christophe's in his
159 bulldog determination; but Pétion was a great general because he
knew when to retire and so lead his enemy into an exposed position. The three Negroes had been born in slavery; Pétion, coming of a cultured and sophisticated affranchi family, grew up in France. Dessalines was a crude ruffian by comparison, while in the face of Pétion's suavity Christophe's impetuousness seemed rankly uncouth. Where they bludgeoned, Pétion persuaded; where they hacked their way through opposition in the determination to gain an end, he graciously yielded and so won new friends. Tactful at every point, he survived even such contretemps as his refusal of the hand of the Emperor's daughter.

As leader of a young nation, Pétion might almost be said to have had too broad an understanding of human nature. He was a gentle ruler over his people; when they erred he did not punish or upbraid, but excused their misdeeds by assuming the cause to be some fatal compulsion over which they momentarily had no control. He had no wish to drive the nation to "success." Neither did he care to use his position for personal aggrandizement. His mind was supple and practical, disdainful of abstractions, undeluded by resounding slogans, fertile in compromise, not finical as to means, always unsurprised, exquisitely tactful. When crises arose to dismay his ministers, Pétion's philosophic calm was undisturbed.

Cynically tolerant, he gave office to political enemies if they chanced to be able. A representative of the topmost class of society,
[648] he managed to moderate antagonisms based on color. He gave sanctuary and financial succor to the Spanish-American liberator,
[871] Simón Bolívar; he established the foundations of an educational
[423] system; he defended the state against Christophe's power; he ruled constitutionally; and he gave land to his people, even to the humblest of them. When he died, his subjects for miles around came into Port-au-Prince, where they stood weeping about his palace, refusing

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

Haiti was in constant financial straits. Money had to be borrowed

abroad; then paid back at the promised time or a foreign warship 175
would appear at some Haitian port. The steady drain of annual 652
indemnity payments to France,[7] the cost of subduing revolutionary
movements, and the large sum eaten up even in times of peace by
wages to the army made successive presidents continue to yield
government land for small sums of ready cash, in spite of Geffrard's
announcement that no more state lands would be alienated. Nissage
Saget, coming to power by a successful revolution, paid out fifteen
acres to each soldier who fought in his campaign in the South.[8] The [171]
straits of the government resembled those of the Continental Congress in America during the Revolution.

Another impulse to parcel the land came during the administration 175
of President Lysius Salomon (1879–88). The debt to France had 643
finally, after half a century, been paid off; that incubus removed, 671
Salomon instituted numerous reforms, financial, military, educa- 423
tional. On February 26, 1883, he signed a law by which every citizen [648]
of Haiti might conceivably become a landowner even if he lacked money to buy land. Upon receipt of a written agreement to cultivate certain tropical crops—specifically, sugar, coffee, cotton, cacao, and tobacco—the government would grant provisional title to a portion of fifteen to twenty-five acres of land taken from the public domain. The grant became final if, after a period of from two to five years, three quarters of the land had been effectively cultivated.

Five hundred requests were made in 1884 for such grants, and twelve hundred in the following year.[9] Thereafter one finds no records of applications for land; the peasants had discovered the hidden trap in this apparent generosity. How could a peasant with a tiny farm lacking implements and tools, not to mention ready cash, be expected to cultivate important crops on fifteen or twenty acres of land? He would have to cut down trees, uproot wild plants, fertilize the ground, purchase equipment and seeds, and then wait several years for a crop. As Thoby says, "And even then he was not a

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[7] See above, pp. 70–71.

[8] Law of July 12, 1870. In August of the same year, Nissage required an inventory to be taken of state lands remaining.

[9] J.-C. Dorsainvil, *Manuel d'histoire d'Haiti* (Port-au-Prince, 1934), p. 317, cites [114]
these figures. They are contested by Dr. F. Dalencour, *Le Sauvetage national par le* [423]
retour à la terre, p. 31, who maintains that only 800 applications came in altogether. Here, as elsewhere, Haitian records are incomplete.

565 178 In most countries in which Westerners are familiar, social distinctions take the form of classes, which are to a greater or less degree mutable. In Haiti, as we have repeatedly indicated, the distinctions are so rigid that *caste* is the only properly descriptive term. There is hardly a Haitian who would not be able to state immediately whether he or any person he knew was, or was not, élite. So it has been with steady persistence ever since Dessalines and Christophe gave way to Pétion and Boyer. Élite youth marries élite girl, and the folkways of the group are passed on from parent to children, thus perpetuating the distinctions. In the pages which follow, all the marks of separation of castes will be examined: religion, economic occupation, marriage, language, manners, and the rest.

[564] [170] Certain aspects of the classic example of the caste system, seen in India, are lacking in Haiti. Religion, for instance, does not require caste endogamy, nor does civil law implicitly acknowledge caste lines by reference to the rights of people of a certain occupation. Custom does more than religion and law could, however, to enforce conformity to the understood rules. Probably the most open efforts to enact caste lines into law were the pronouncements of Dessalines and Christophe that all but a few people should be bound to the soil; and Boyer's Code Rural—a feeble echo of days gone by. The two black rulers were able to enforce the distinctions they made; but when they died their feudal arrangements lapsed, while the separation of classes continued. With the recurrence of revolutions after 1843 it behooved the élite, when occasionally they were in authority, not to lay themselves open to fresh attack upon grounds of aristocratic presumption, for they never knew when they might need the support of the masses. Any black revolutionary leader would have been able to turn an enacted caste law to his own ends, even if a Senate consisting predominantly of light-colored men had had the power to enact such a law. Time and inertia won the battle for the élite. By not joining issue with the masses at any definite point, the aristocrats gained their end of caste distinction, for they were willing to endure the self-discipline necessary to the maintenance of social standards, as the masses were not.

565 484 177 186 Just as in colonial days the ambition of the well-to-do freedman was to go to France for his education and his holidays, so in free Haiti the lure of France has continued to be strong for the aristocrat. There is not a trace of animosity against the country which enslaved the Negroes, and which in 1802–3 tried by trickery to take away the

175 567 along that river, Dahomey was the name of a powerful kingdom
under a political administration which embraced a fair amount of
interchange of ideas and similarity of social institutions, including
religion.

175 Discretion made the planters separate slaves who knew each other,
567 in order to minimize opportunities for revolt among them. This
178 policy, although it prevented the rapid growth of "slave" customs,
at the same time dispersed Dahomeans all over the colony; beliefs
and practices held in common among the slaves were likely to take
on a Dahomean cast. Since their work was directed, their freedom of
movement limited, and their family life broken up, there was practically
no opportunity for the outcropping of *any* African ideas
relating to economic life, government, property, education, or
175 marriage. The one sphere in which it was possible for Old World
178 beliefs to continue was the religious. No slave dealer could penetrate
796 the minds of his workers or silence their folk tales and folk songs in
771 the evening when work was done; even the strictest plantation
535 owners allowed dances in the slave quarters on Saturday nights and
Sunday. It is the dance, a vital part of Dahomean religion, which
seems to have formed the nucleus around which the diverse beliefs
of African tribesmen grouped themselves, for it was a form of action
which need not involve anything more than amusement or emotional
release, if the participant were not religiously inclined. In the
beginning, as Goethe observes, was the Act. To this simple Act of
dancing, the Word, with thought behind it, could easily be added
later. Practically all African tribesmen danced; and the numerous
Dahomeans had a dance which was ostensibly for diversion but could
be turned to a religious purpose as well.

771 Here, then, was the skeleton of a slave religion. Although every
171 single African tribe had its own beliefs and ritual, each (so far as we
●174 know) had common elements with every other one. For example, all
slaves, whether Senegalese or Angolese, believed in a multiplicity of
spiritual beings, some of whom controlled the aspects of nature—
lightning and storms, the sea, the sky. They thought that disease and
other ill fortune came from spirits who must be placated in order to
win back health and well-being. All felt that the normal course of
events could be altered by magical spells, formulae, or charms; that
one could bring misfortune to an enemy, luck to oneself, or ward
off otherwise inevitable fate. Most of them had been accustomed to

learn the properties of plants, both for healing and for poison. Except 771
for the belief in spiritual beings, this folk knowledge would hardly 171
have been classed as religious, for it was useful in every phase of daily 174
life; the classification is that of the anthropologist, not of the simple
black.

If Dahomean beliefs prevailed over others of African origin, it was
chiefly because of the numerical preponderance of Dahomeans in the
colony, together with the popularity of their religious dances. The [776]
Dahomean spirits or gods were Vodun; the dance in which the [796]
worshiper sought the inspiration of the spirits was a Vodun dance. [535]
Like all but the highly organized religions, this one recognized the
validity of other beliefs. Its practitioners were not bigots. No
hierarchy existed to keep out new accretions. Imperceptibly these
were added to the original basic form: here an Arada spirit, there a
Congolese prayer, and in many instances a Catholic saint, until the
composite Vodun religion began to take shape.

There is no evidence that during colonial times Vodun was ever 174
considered important by the white ruling class—certainly not as a 535
faith. To most planters the word was the name for a vigorous dance. 796
Judging from Moreau de Saint-Méry's description it was held openly [192]
enough, at times being witnessed by the whites as a sort of nocturnal [114]
diversion. Moreau knew, as did other whites, that there were
"superstitious beliefs" connected with it, yet the offhand use of the
word "superstition" was indication enough that the beliefs were not
regarded as important. We have seen, however, what profitable use 175
the slaves were able to make of the apparent innocence of their
dances. When the idea of revolt began to germinate among them, 669
gathering on each plantation at least once a week they had ample 567
opportunity to hatch their plans. It is known that the campaign for 202
revolt was developed partly under the stimulus of the Negro 793
Boukman, a *houngan* or priest of Vodun. By means of drumbeats, 771
which to the whites merely pounded out the rhythm for dancing
but had for centuries been a means of communication at long distance
in parts of West Africa, that ripening plot was telegraphed from one
plantation to another. Even more important, perhaps, was the unity
of feeling made possible, despite all incoherence of tradition and
language, by the Vodun background. 114

The revolt of half a million slaves was a success. This fact has been 175
rather too calmly accepted by historians of Saint-Domingue, who 669
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3: Leyburn Z-4,5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

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175 have explained it chiefly by the surprise element of the uprising. But
669 when else in modern history have slaves successfully revolted against
668 their armed masters and become permanently free? Successful revolutions even of people not in bodily slavery have had acknowledged leadership, whereas in Haiti no real leader appeared for the insurgents. Boukman's influence, indeed, at its widest never reached beyond a part of the northern plain; he had about the same range of power as a
[793] ward boss in the United States. On the plantations Hallaou, Hyacinthe, Lafortune, and others whose names are unimportant or unknown, Vodun houngans likewise welded slave opinion within their narrow districts. But no single great leader appeared. As the conflict was developed, without plan or unity under the divided and contradictory action of numerous blacks, what held the people together was, negatively, their hatred of the white masters; positively, their Vodun beliefs. Only later in the decade did a true leader, Toussaint L'Ouverture, emerge to consolidate their victory.

776 As often happens among unsophisticated people convinced of the
793 rightness of their cause, the local Vodun leaders were sure of their
761 own invulnerability through the protection of one or another of the
782 spirits.[8] They convinced their followers as well, to such a degree that
781 when an invulnerable chief fell there were dozens of reasons to explain the unexpected death rather than any disillusion. Usually, failure to follow the rigorous propitiation requirements of the protecting god offered the key to the misfortune. Various ones of them were known to be exacting and troublesome. The leader at Trou-Coffi, Romaine by name, had absorbed enough of the Roman Catholicism in Vodun to feel that the Virgin Mary was his especial
[781] patroness.[9] Beyond this specific belief in invulnerability was the general trust that Vodun spirits would lead their devotees to success, would give them a happy issue out of all their distress.

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[171] [781] 8. A parallel case of belief in invulnerability because of divine protection was that of the North American Indians both at the time of Tecumseh and later in the Sioux outbreaks at the climax of the Ghost-Dance Religion. See James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1892–93 [Washington, 1896]), chap. X.

[114] [781] 9. The importance of Vodun beliefs in connection with the slave revolt is stressed by Dr. J.-C. Dorsainvil, *Vodou et Névrose* (Port-au-Prince, 1931), pp. 33–34. He says of many of the chiefs: "The belief in their invulnerability was not at all the result of calculation, but was a true state of mind, a sort of autosuggestion which explains very well the chronic heroism of certain leaders of the revolution in Saint-Domingue and of the war of independence of 1802–3."

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SV3 Haiti SV3

796 steadying his attention, he practically hypnotizes him back into full
535 consciousness. As soon as the possessed is normal again, water out of
787 the calabash is poured at the central post and a sign of the cross is
made with the candle before it.

796 Contrary to the expectation of thrill-seeking white visitors, the
535 Vodun dance does not merit the name of an orgy. True, the dancers
786 wear their old clothes, for they are going to have violent exercise;
true also, those who are possessed give the impression of losing some
of their inhibitions. But the dancers do not embrace each other as at
a white man's dance; the drinking which occurs is hardly ever excessive;
and the climax of a successful dance is a religious experience.
[831] The Haitian is no more obsessed by sex than is the American; indeed,
living simply and without many of the artificial restraints of "civilization,"
he is probably less so. What white visitors sometimes see,
under the impression that they are witnessing a Vodun dance, is
nothing more than a secular Saturday night social dance. It, too, has
drum rhythms instead of an orchestra, musical instruments being
rare in Haiti; but the dance has no more religious (or "Voodoo")
significance than a barn dance in the United States.

771 Creed and practice go hand in hand in Haiti. The Vodun worshiper
776 believes in the loa of his faith and does the things necessary to
get in touch with them. These conceptions are the major part of his
creed, as the corresponding actions form the bulk of his religious
activity.

● 171 A few articles of the creed remain. "I believe in respect to twins
. . ." Hundreds of so-called primitive peoples see in twins some special
845 significance, now fortunate, now tragic. Many of the tribes along the
787 Atlantic coast of Africa thought of twins as an omen, so that the
presence of ritual regard for them in Haiti is hardly surprising. It is
probably incorrect to speak of the worship, or the cult, of twins, for
they are not deified, nor is there a common ritual for them: thousands
of persons pay them no homage whatever. One family has a
high regard for twins because it has numbered them among its
ancestors or recent relatives; another family pays respect to all twins
because a priest has advised seeking the good luck which comes from
[782] *marassa* (twins). There seems to be some confusion of thought about
this aspect of religion: twins are not gods, but merely omens from
the gods; yet sacrifices are made to them. Christmas and harvest are
the usual seasons for the offering. Food is prepared in the morning

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SV3 Haiti SV3

and set apart on special plates in a separate room for them; in the 171
afternoon the family eats the food. If the twins to whom homage is 845
being offered are still alive, they must wear special clothes at the 787
sacrifice. [782]

"I believe in the careful cult of the dead . . ." Once more it is 761
necessary to renew one's acquaintance with primitive and folk belief
to grasp the Haitian attitude. Life is desirable, death is dreaded; both
death and the dead are feared. In the actual world, any excursion
from the comfortably familiar countryside of one's home leads to
confusion and bewilderment. Except in the company of his fellows [166]
(on a religious pilgrimage to the waterfalls at Ville-Bonheur, for
example), a Haitian almost never leaves his valley or mountainside
and market town. Sophisticated people view the unknown with [181]
pleasurable excitement, for they have learned by experience that the
unfamiliar is not necessarily frightful; it is quite the contrary with
simple folk, whose meagre experience with the unfamiliar has been
at least somewhat alarming.

Death is the ultimate unknown. The fearsomeness the imagination conceives to lie beyond death seems to exist in almost direct proportion to people's ignorance of the material world. The fear of ghosts is a commonplace among primitive folk, as among the uneducated in the "civilized" world. Where ghosts are considered powerful, one part of any comprehensive cult will certainly deal with the dead.

In Haitian Vodun the teachings of the Catholic Church have 769
exerted more influence upon the cult of the dead than upon any other 177
part of the religion. The preparation of the corpse for burial shows
no traces of African practice; the watch (or wake) and wailing over [764]
the deceased is familiar; the funeral itself is conducted by a Catholic
priest, with burial in consecrated ground. Thereafter, the continual
efforts to secure the tranquil repose of the departed bear the earmarks
of faithful Catholic practice; it is at this point, however, that the cult
begins to assume distinctive features, for it is firmly believed that the
dead exert tremendous power in the world of the living. This power
comes from God—the Christian God. The case has been put suc-
cinctly by Sumner and Keller: "The relation between man and 114
ghost resolves itself . . . into a relation of rights and duties, with all 776
the rights on one side and all the duties on the other."[30] God gives 769

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[30] W. G. Sumner and A. G. Keller, *The Science of Society* (New Haven, 1927), II, 829.

Everyone believes in it, though few would make nice distinctions 789
between the two. Starting with extremes, the houngan conducting a 793
service with sacrifice is officiating at a purely religious rite, while the 791
bocor (sorcerer) concocting a love charm is dealing wholly in magic.
It is perfectly proper, however, for a respectable houngan to brew a
mixture, calling on the loa meanwhile for assistance, to cure a sick
person: is this magic? Certainly it is private, specific, practical. A
respectable houngan will not permit himself to dabble in evil magic,
destined to bring misfortune to someone else;[36] but such work is the
stock in trade of the bocor, who knows the dangers of his profession
yet is willing to run the risk for the sake of high profit. Between the
reputable houngan and the awesome bocor may sometimes be found
the *caplata*, a sort of jack-of-all-trades, who professes to be able to
achieve whatever is demanded of him in magic, whether beneficial
or harmful, but whose reputation is not high enough to make men
trust him with important magical enterprises.

There exists one continual check to save the gullible from charlatanism 789
on the part of the practitioner: the performer of any kind of 791
magic must make frequent exhibitions of his powers. If the specialist
cannot make his magic work, he soon loses his reputation. The career
of magic is not one to be entered lightly. Constant search for medicinal
plants, constant experimentation, comparison of practice—the
requirements of the profession are as strenuous as those for the successful
American doctor. Magic is like a live wire: it cannot be
handled with impunity. The slightest slip on the part of the bocor
might loose divine wrath on the bungler and quack. It is said that
almost every bocor dies an evil death, hoist on his own petard. For
the houngan the risk is not so great, since in general he relies upon
the might of his own special loa, who of old has been familiar with
him. True, he may run the risk of purchasing the services of other
loa, but it is a risk, since his family loa, quick to feel insult, might
punish him.

Magic runs the gamut from passive to active, simple to complex. 789
The commonest manifestation of magic in Haitian daily life is one
familiar to most peoples in the world—the charm. As in Italy and [171]
other southern European countries, the Haitian peasant believes in
the evil eye. "Maldioque," it is called—a term not far removed from
the Italian "*mal occhio*." The common belief is that certain persons,

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[36] This is commonly called "black" magic.

VIII

RELIGIOUS BORROWINGS

771 ROMAN Catholicism in Haiti is, as we have seen, the officially approved, socially proper, and outwardly recognized religion. Vodun, on the contrary, is legislated against and driven into the background by the élite who are ashamed to have foreigners see the power in their country of a folk religion which has its crude side. These two are Haiti's faiths.

794 No one takes a census in Haiti, for the peasants have their suspicions of officials who pry into personal affairs. There is consequently no way of knowing precisely how many Haitians regard themselves as "belonging" to the Catholic Church. The priests list the whole population of a diocese as Catholic. In so doing they are probably not far wrong, for although not every person gets to confession each year or attends to his other religious duties, certainly nineteen out of twenty Haitians, élite and common folk alike, would claim to be Catholics. On the whole, it may be that the simple people are more sincere in this, for they are not touched with skepticism where things spiritual are concerned.

771 171 In the United States censuses of religious bodies, if an individual is listed as a member of one denomination he cannot be listed as a member of another. We are trained to religious exclusiveness: we are *either* Baptists *or* Methodists, Jews *or* Catholics. Not every people, however, has schooled itself to such sharp distinctions. The Japanese Buddhist may regard himself as a worshiper of Shinto as well; the Chinese can be Taoist and Confucian at the same time. By our rigidity we deny ourselves a great deal of inner comfort: I may like the earnest fervor of the Missionary Baptists but like as well the stately ritual of Anglo-Catholicism; I must accept one or the other, however, for if I am a member of the former sect I cannot at the same time be admitted to all the rights and privileges of the latter. There is probably a spiritual compensation resulting from such single-minded allegiance, but we are frequently forced to deny

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validity to forms and ideas which we know, in our hearts, might 171
sustain us.[1]

The Haitian peasant is not interested in making formal distinctions. 771
If he is critical, it is only of results, rarely of the means used to obtain those results. If he cannot gain his ends in one way he is not too proud to try another, and still a third. Nineteen out of twenty Haitians, then, being Roman Catholics in religion, are likewise worshipers of Vodun. There is so much mystery in the world, so much misfortune, beauty, sorrow, and joy that it would be unthinkable to deny God or the gods: mankind has worship enough for them all,
and need enough of them all. There is to the peasant no conflict [778]
between Vodun and Catholicism; the two are complementary, even if sometimes the Catholic priests make coöperation impossible.

Let us recall for a moment the earlier history of the country. In 175
the days of slavery one may imagine the Church would have found 177
it difficult, even if its priests and planters had been willing, to train 771
all the blacks as thorough Catholics. Some concepts took root, some 794
rites immediately appealed. Below the surface, however, the African ideas of the preponderant Dahomeans were spreading through the plantations. In the crucial early days of independence, when the customs and social institutions of the Haitians (as Haitians, not as expatriate slaves) were in process of formation, the country's rulers were not deeply religious; moreover the State was in open schism from the Church. For fifty-five years no approved churchman was at work with the people. The seventy men whom some historians mention as priests were on the whole venal and self-seeking, even vicious. Their least concern was to wean the people away from their superstitions, for precisely in these folk beliefs lay the greatest source of gain. By the time the breach between State and Church was healed it was too late to make single-minded Catholics of the Haitian peasants. They would accept what the new and active priests taught them, but not to the exclusion of what they had believed for a century.

With the élite the Church has had more success; assiduous teach- 565
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[1] This either-or dichotomy is not limited to religion: we divide ourselves similarly in politics, family life, residence, and so on. If I am a Lutheran, a Republican, a married man with a home in New York, I cannot at the same time be an Episcopalian, a Democrat, and a voter in Chicago with a second spouse and family there. What is impossible and ridiculous for Americans, however, is in some ways the normal course of life for the Haitian.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

[p. 177]

IX

HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS

TOLERANT understanding of the ways of alien people is rare in matters relating to sex. Occasionally we may regard marital and sexual practices which differ from our own as amusing or ridiculous; more frequently we find them distasteful and disgusting. A long religious heritage has implanted in us a definite personal morality, familiar in Puritanism and in the codes of the great majority of early American pioneers. Accompanying and dominated by this religious aspect has been the legal idea of sexual morality. A middle-class tradition of private property, hence of orderly marriages legally recognized, has schooled us for centuries to approve certain moral and sexual rules: monogamic marriage, children born in wedlock, a public wedding ceremony by approved authorities, censure of sexual relations which might confuse the passage of property. Although sympathetic tolerance for foreign ways has never been an outstanding American characteristic, it is least evident in connection with divergent sexual practices. We do not remind ourselves of the utilitarian basis of a part of our own sexual codes.

Where people have economic and social backgrounds different 577
from those of Western Europe and the United States, other codes 171
will prevail. Elements which have made American moral standards
what they are were lacking or appeared in different form in Haiti. 831
Instead of middle-class European tradition there was African tribal practice; instead of diffused small private properties there was slavery; instead of the Puritan notion that sex relations were in general sinful was the less rigorous view that sexual intercourse was entirely normal; instead of the example of monogamous family life constantly before the minds of children growing up, there was the example of libertinage among lofty whites and laxness among the blacks.

Nothing in the experience of the slave régime could have predis- 175
posed toward orderly marriage these people, soon to become Hai- 567
tians. Certain masters actually prohibited weddings among their
slaves, while most others discouraged it, since the development of 581
family ties among the blacks would only have made for complication

241 day local practice dedicates to work in one's own fields—generally
574 Monday or Tuesday. The prospect of working with one's fellows,
[527] of a midday feast with plentiful drink, of singing, talking, and hearing
the news, is enough to induce most of the neighbors to come,
even though the work will be hard. As with American log-rollings
and house-raisings, there is a practical reason for accepting the invitation:
by participating in other coumbites a man will be able to
invite his neighbors to help him in his own larger tasks. The work is
[461] done in rhythm[7] as on Southern road gangs in the United States,
with one man specially designated to beat the drum, blow the conch,
or sing a topical song, to set the pace. While the men are at work,
the women prepare the noonday feast.

This typical characteristic of Haitian rural life has been described
114 in detail as it operates near the village of Mirebalais by Prof. Melville
476 J. Herskovits. His contention is that the custom, in general and in
574 detail, derives from Dahomey, West Africa, the home of many of
174 the original slaves.[8] Although his evidence is impressive, there are
171 nevertheless objections to it. Coöperative enterprise for tasks larger
178 than one man can accomplish alone is common in the United States
and in parts of Europe and South America, as well as in Africa. It is
241 not an economic device which strikes one as requiring unusual inventiveness,
for cases of it are common even where the participants
have had no previous experience of it. Further, Dahomean practice
could not have been kept up during slave days, nor yet during the
régimes of Toussaint, Dessalines, Christophe, and Pétion. (The first
three required forced labor under overseers, and landownership by
peasants was still rare under Pétion, although a beginning had been
made.) In the thirty years from 1790, when the last slaves arrived,
until Christophe died in 1820, many old ways were certainly forgotten.
Not a single one of the numerous books written by visitors
during Boyer's quarter-century, 1818 to 1843, mentions the practice,
which certainly must have struck Englishmen, Frenchmen, and
Americans if it had been characteristic of the peasant life of the time.
If one concludes that the coumbite did not become peasant practice
until the mid-nineteenth century, all possibility of contact with
Negroes familiar with Dahomean routine has disappeared. What

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[7] A Haitian poet, Charles F. Pressoir, entitles a book of his verses *Au Rythme des coumbites* (Port-au-Prince, 1933).

[8] *Op. cit.*, chap. IV.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

was well enough, but all upper-class landlords wanted the privilege 175
of living in leisure on an income derived from the menial labor of 665
black workers. Fraternity was a principle ridiculous to a group whose 565
never-ceasing struggle was to confirm the separation of castes. The term "Liberal," then, was borrowed not from the revolutionary documents of the late eighteenth century, but from the parliamentary parties of the nineteenth—those who saw more opportunity for themselves and their group if the power of tyrants and kings could be curbed by legislatures. The idea was particularly congenial to the Haitian intelligentsia for the simple reason that the powerful rulers of Haiti, past and present, were Negroes who did not share the aims and ideals of the social upper class.[12]

By holding such "liberal" views, the mulatto élite saw their one 175
opportunity not only for curbing the strong men among the Negroes 565
who again and again tried to rule Haiti as if it were a native African 646
state and themselves the supreme chieftains, but also for indulging 666
their own special penchants. A Senate filled with élite politicians 664
suited the talents of the educated aristocrats. They liked constitutions and codes; the law was their favorite profession; they were adepts at drawing neat distinctions between this and that in an academic issue; polished oratory, skilful argument, fluent speech were knacks peculiar to them by temperament, position, education. Boyer had been the beau-ideal of the academic "liberals," with his talkative Senate, his complete set of Codes and national system of courts; the mid-century party members came to realize what they had lost by driving him out.

Every time the Nationalists came to power the colored élite 175
suffered. Under Dessalines they lost greatly in property and position; 661
Christophe had hated and hounded them; Soulouque put many of 565
their leaders to death. The only monarchs Haiti ever had were 643
blacks, and the two most tyrannical presidents in the first seventy-five years after independence were Nationalists (Pierrot, 1845–46, and Domingue, 1874–76).

The experience of the Liberal presidents with parliamentary insti- 175
tutions was not entirely a happy one, however. Pétion and Boyer had 643

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[12] It must be recalled that no parliaments of England, France, or the United States in the early nineteenth century had true democratic representation. Property qualifications for voting, rotten boroughs, and the persistence of privilege assured that only the "classes" should have full representation, and so rule the masses. [646] [171]

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

exceeding the jurisdiction of the local juges, these juries to be named 693
by the doyen and his colleagues. It was a dubious reform, often a 695
worthless privilege; at times it was definitely harmful, for no matter how explicit the law, mere technicalities in a long, involved trial could be completely befuddling to an illiterate juror. Brown tells the tale of a certain foreman of the jury who asked a juror his opinion of a defendant's innocence; the juror replied that he could not write, whereas "you have written it all down. Let us know what you have done."[3] Innocence might easily be convicted by this system, and guilt escape. The addition of a jury to the court was even useless in many instances, for the language of the lawyers was French, and that of the jurors almost certain to be Créole. Boyer's attempt to graft English court practice upon the French system already functioning in Haiti was certainly not happy; the jury system shortly disappeared.

Complicated forms are not for the peasant. He knew a soldier and 641
a soldier's function in the countryside, but not the relation of the arrondissement to the national government; the juge de paix was understandable, but not the procedure of the civil courts at department capitals. The national government and its structure were remote, although the president's name might be familiar. Haiti was really organized from the top down rather than from the bottom up. The powers of the early presidents were arbitrary: they could not only order changes in the framework of any part of government, but might also shift at will the personnel.

Carl Becker remarks: "In 1791, the French began their spectacular 114
feat in constitution making. Between 1791 and 1875 Taine counts 175
thirteen French constitutions adopted in relatively rapid succession. 647
I can find only twelve, but maybe Taine is right. It doesn't really 171
matter. The point is that for facility, speed, and endurance in constitution making, France holds the record. Yet other nations also ran."[4] Haiti was one of them: in fact the record is properly hers, although Professor Becker does not mention the little Caribbean state. In the nineteenth century Haiti lived under fifteen constitutions, to which she has added at least two more in the twentieth century. It is not always easy to say when a constitution is new: its author may

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[3] Jonathan Brown, *The History and Present Condition of St. Domingo*, II, 271-272.

[4] "Afterthoughts on Constitutions," *The Yale Review*, XXVII, No. 3 (Spring, 1938), 453.

114 consider it novel when it changes little but detail; and some of Haiti's
175 seventeen documents were too short-lived to be significant. Haiti
642 shows her Frenchness in this constitution making, this love of being
● 171 logical and having the details all written down in proper order.

To try to analyze the content of so many documents would be a
175 work of supererogation.[5] A brief comment upon each, however, will
improve one's acquaintance with the mind of Haitian statesmen.

175 1801. Toussaint L'Ouverture's constitution, laying the framework
of his venture as director of the colony while still acknowledging its
642 relationship to France. In it he announced himself governor-general
466 for life with the right to name his successor, thereby becoming the
forerunner of the strong-man principle in politics. The most important part of this constitution was its detailed organization of the
forced-labor system.

175 1805. Dessalines' constitution establishing the empire. In many
respects it did not differ from Toussaint's previous document, for the
642 same military organization was preserved, and the same system of
563 forced labor; otherwise, there was little structure of government.
One article was included which was to appear in every other constitution of Haiti up to 1918: "No white man shall set foot on this
territory as master or as landowner."[6] In other respects there were
sagacious provisions which did not endure. For example, the generic
name of "blacks" was adopted for all Haitians, of whatever color.
175 The Emperor was trying thus to forestall the dissensions which
642 inevitably must result from the growth of social classes based on skin
[463] color. Another important provision was that every citizen who was
not an ordinary cultivator must learn and practice some mechanical
art. This was not merely a thrust at the aristocratic pretensions of the
old affranchis, but also an endeavor to make Haiti industrious and
self-sufficient. Except in the North, where Dessalines' deputy Christophe kept the requirement, the article was honored only in the
breach. The social situation was touched at one other point: "No
one is worthy of being a Haitian who is not a good father, a good
[428] son, a good husband, and a good soldier." Parents were forbidden to
disinherit their children. Although, as has been shown, the Emperor

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[5] Such an analysis was made by Louis-Joseph Janvier, *Les Constitutions d'Haïti, 1801–85* (Paris, 1886).

[6] He had made this declaration first on April 28, 1804; at that time the words "No white man" read "No colonist nor European."

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

1. *Overpopulation*

161 Two and a half or possibly three million people live within 10,200 square miles. These figures, if they are to convey a reality, must be conceived in more familiar terms. Haiti is just about the size of Vermont, but has six times as many people crowded together among its mountains In a list of countries still independent in 1935 Haiti ranked among the first ten in density of population, yet its economic life was agricultural, while the other nine have a high degree of industrialization.

161 171 As one looks at a full-page map of the Western Hemisphere it is difficult even to find the tiny wisp of color which marks the Caribbean republic of Haiti. Of the twenty-two American countries, including Canada, Haiti is next to last in size (El Salvador is smaller), yet ranks thirteenth in population, and far and away the first in *density* of population, in the whole hemisphere. The figures are revealing:

Country	*Population*	*Area in Square Miles*	*Density*
1. United States	131,669,275	3,026,701	43.5
2. Brazil	43,246,931	3,275,510	13.2
3. Mexico	19,478,791	763,944	25.5
4. Argentina	12,762,000	1,078,278	11.7
5. Canada	11,012,724	3,694,863	2.9
6. Colombia	8,730,000	448,794	19.4
7. Peru	6,600,000	532,184	12.3
8. Chile	4,626,508	296,717	15.6
9. Cuba	4,108,650	41,164	99.8
10. Venezuela	3,451,677	352,051	9.8
11. Bolivia	3,426,296	537,792	6.3
12. Guatemala	3,044,490	45,452	67.0
13. Haiti	3,000,000	10,204	294.9

161 Haiti's density per square mile is therefore greater than that of China or India—two world examples of overpopulation—and even greater than that of New York State, with its enormous city areas. Haiti's largest town has a population of 100,000; there are seven towns ranging from 7,500 to 20,000. The density of distribution through the countryside is therefore evident.

wo Beside the figures given above must be set those of the government

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

To grasp the import of Haiti's problem of

THE HAITIAN PEOPLE

270 over-population one
161 should imagine the number of Vermonters sextupled, working with
433 hand tools and using methods which their great-grandfathers would
171 have considered antiquated; imagine the state with only a hundred
511 miles of paved roads, with no harnessed water power, no substantial
fortunes, no middle class; imagine the farms gullied and worn out; ninety-five per cent of the people illiterate and undernourished; the state having no industry and practically no goods imported from New York, Massachusetts, or any other part of the United States. Under such conditions the low standard of living would be readily understandable.

Haiti might also be compared with Mississippi. Less than a quarter the size of that American state, it nevertheless has a larger population. Both Haiti and Mississippi are agricultural, with few towns, although no part of Haiti now has land as richly fertile as that of the Yazoo Delta. The low standard of living of the Mississippi share-cropper, whether Negro or white, is notorious—yet he has access to a few of the perquisites of civilization, whether these be elementary schools or moving pictures; the Haitian peasant lacks even these. In America the undercurrent of feeling is that something should be, probably eventually will be, done to improve the lot of the share-cropper. Certainly there is wealth enough in the country at large to alleviate conditions where they are deemed to be socially unhealthy. Not so in Haiti: the land is poorer, the numbers even greater, the area much smaller; and there is no wealth in the country, nor enough social vision among the upper classes to deal with the relentless increase of numbers.

168 How conceivably might this problem be dealt with? The first answer which would occur to many Americans, namely, birth control, is out of the question at present. Expense would stand in the way of its use by people who hardly ever see money; the peasants, unable to read, suspicious of new-fangled ways, untouched by all efforts to "uplift" them, and with no educational agencies, could hardly be converted to the use of contraceptives; while the Catholic
[795] Church, which until now has not had to raise its voice against birth control in Haiti, would fight any proposal to introduce it as it fought the campaign in Puerto Rico.

167 Another possible answer is migration. This solution many Haitians
648 have tried without prompting. With little money available for

Only a beginning has been made of collecting the thousands of "Cric? Crac!" stories current in Haiti. 538

It is only recently that people have written Créole, so that there is no standard orthography. Every writer spells words phonetically, with consequent irregularities, and with wide differences between two people writing the same thing. Recent etymological studies may lead eventually to a dictionary and a standard spelling. In order that the reader may see the resemblance of Créole to French, yet its differences from that language, we shall quote a part of one of La Fontaine's fables put into Créole verse by Georges Sylvain.[10] His own French retranslation accompanies the fable, turning such phrases as "female pig" into "sow." 212 534

Nan temps toutt bett té palé,	*Au temps où toutes les bêtes parlaient,*
Té g'ain (palant pa respé)	*Il y avait (sauf votre respect)*
Té g'ain gnou fémel cochon.	*Il y avait une truie.*
Zott connin gen cochon bon?	*Vous savez comme les truies sont bonnes gens?*
Cila-là té fait zanmi	*Celle-ci avait fait amitié*
Avec gnou fémel chien, qui	*Avec une chienne, qui*
Té prett pou mi bas. Chien-là,	*Était sur le point de mettre bas. La chienne*
Gnou jou, dit cochon con ça:	*Un jour, dit à la truie:*
"Moin pré pou moin accouché,	*"Me voilà près d'accoucher,*
"Ma conmé, t'en pri! souplé,	*"Ma commère, je vous en prie, s'il vous plaît,*
"Pémett moin prété gnou coin	*"Permettez-moi d'emprunter un coin*
"Nan pac ou, pou pititt moin."	*"De votre parc, pour mes enfants."*[11]

The terseness of the language is fascinating, a situation is hit off precisely in a few words: a stuffed shirt has been deflated, and the truth has been told. A Haitian was heard to say, "Nègue riche li mulatte; mulatte pauvre li nègue"—a rich Negro is accounted a mulatto; a poor mulatto is to all intents and purposes no better than a Negro. And there is a profound comment on the whole caste system. 538 196

Wherever the French went in the Caribbean region the Créole language spread—in Louisiana, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guiana. Each region has its own peculiarities, but in general it may be said that these other regions show much more French (as distinct from Norman) influence on Créole, and much less Spanish and English influence. Similarly in Haitian towns, where the élite speak French 175 197 [171]

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[10] *Cric? Crac! Fables de La Fontaine racontées par un montagnard haïtien et transcrites en vers créoles* (Port-au-Prince, 1929), p. 21.

[11] "*Zott*" means "*vous autres*"; "*gnou*" is "*une*."